

# PROTEAN SYNTHESIS # 1

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## A Protean Family Newsletter

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### EDITORIAL

I got some enthusiastic replies to Protean Synthesis #0, but only from people I already know. Judy and Ashta'ar were so enthusiastic that they gave me articles, so I don't ~~get to~~ ~~write the whole zine myself~~ have to write the whole zine myself. I didn't get so much as one mailing address from any person I don't already know.

This is supposed to be a Protean Family Newsletter, and it isn't the Protean Family without the Bay Area and Midwest branches of the family. I appeal to you, send me your mailing addresses! You don't have to send your names (initials and a PO box will do); you don't have to send money; you don't have to send articles.

If you do send articles, I will be grateful, whether they were written especially for me or already published elsewhere. Articles can be news of what you're doing or thinking, book and music reviews, poetry, non-secret ritual material, information about topics related to the Craft.

If I don't get any responses from more people, there may not be a Protean Synthesis #2. If I do get at least one response from the missing branches of the family, Protean Synthesis #2 will appear around Yule '87, with the deadline around Dec 5, '87. I reserve the right to be arbitrary and tyrannical. Oh, by the way, I already have about eight pages of material about initiation and dedication for #2.

THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES: A SOURCEBOOK  
edited by Marvin Meyer, is a collection

of (English translations of) the Classical texts from which historians have formed their ideas of the Mystery Religions. It has a wonderful preface explaining what the various Mystery religions had in common, which is a pretty exact description of our Craft.

### ANOTHER LOOK AT ARES, GREEK GOD OF WAR

I was looking in a Mythology book in an unsuccessful search for information about Apollo Smintheus ("of mice"). Instead, I learned things I already knew about Ares, Greek god of war.

We already know that the Greeks despised Ares as god of aggression, violence, and destruction, in contrast to Athena, goddess of defense, strategy, and tactics. He was portrayed as a bully and coward. He was tried (and convicted, and punished) for murdering Halirrhothius son of Poseidon and Euryte. (The hill where the trial took place is therefore named the Areopagus.)

Take a closer look. Halirrhothius was attempting to rape Ares's daughter Alcippe, and Ares killed him in defense of Alcippe. Ares was father of the Amazons (in some version, via his and Aphrodite's daughter Harmonia), and so fond of them that he attempted to take vengeance on Achilles for killing Penthesilea (but Zeus interfered). (I note that Alcippe's name, like many Amazon names, contains the element "-hippe", meaning "horse".)

I am tremendously struck by the possibility that Ares, bad-mouthed all these centuries, is one of ours: a rape fighter and friend of Amazons.

Headdress Mask  
Cameroon  
Acquired 1917

"... when German troops occupied the cult house, the 'fetish man' intentionally damaged the nose, presumably to destroy the mask's magical power so that the strangers could not use it ..."\*

Now they come,  
the strong and stupid soldiers,  
now they march into this House.

Quick! Now!  
In this last moment,  
Break the spirit mask!

This is the new mask:  
Broken images,  
A broken nation,  
A broken old man.

They will not see.  
They may not use.  
They can not harm.

Across an ocean  
And seventy years,  
Behind plate glass,  
Living, real,  
The broken mask waits

Spirit fills it.  
Love built it.  
Love broke it.

Love knows it.  
Love builds it  
Again.

Judy Harrow  
July, 1987

\* from a museum display card at The Center for African Art, New York City.

Book Review: Catmagic, by Whitley Strieber  
(TOR Paperback, \$4.95)

Whitley Strieber cranks out best-seller after best-seller, and never mind that he's tried to get you to believe he was brain-programmed by UFO aliens--the guy can WRITE. Catmagic is the book he was plugging on the Oprah Winfrey show, when he and Laurie Cabot (Laurie, wash your face!) debated two Fundies. This book is a lot of fun to read; there are enough plot twists to keep you guessing, the English is grammatical, and there's sufficient gore for the horror fans (this is marketed as a horror book). There's a short preface in which Strieber gives the obligatory Witches-are-a-religion explanation, and directs readers to Circle Wicca for more information. (!)

I don't want to spoil the book for you if you haven't read it yet, so I'll summarize only some of the plot. Basically, there is a rich old woman who is also a High Priestess and Witch Queen. Her estate, which is near a fictional town in New Jersey, has been transformed into a Wiccan commune; a beautiful post-hippie dream of organic farming, living in tune with the Earth's rhythms, large outdoor rituals, casual nudity, and children being brought up in the Craft. Most of the residents of the town are either Witches also, or at least sympathetic towards the Craft. The town is also the home of a very minor college, where a biological researcher (secretly underwritten by the rich old woman) is experimenting with the use of strong electromagnets to stop and then re-start electrical activity in living creatures--in other words, to kill them and revive them unharmed. The aim is to provide initiates with a relatively safe shamanic death-and-rebirth experience. But the experiments are having results that do not please the old priestess.

There are faery folk, only partially of this world, living in the woods and hills around. They are in general kindly disposed toward the Witches, but they have their own less-than-comprehensible-to-mortals priorities.

And a self-ordained Fundamentalist preacher has started up a congregation in the town. He drinks a bit too much and has some very unusual psychological problems. He manages to whip his followers into a Witch-hating fervor, blaming everything that goes against their narrow moral standards on the Witches.

The action of the story takes place partially in the Otherworld, partly inside the heads of various characters, and partly in "reality". Events on one plane affect events on another. I won't reveal the ending, but after a series of confrontations between the Witches and the Fundies, we win.

Notice one thing: The Bad Guys are the Fundies, and the Good Guys are us. Why is this important? Well, here in the suburbs of New York, they're selling this book in supermarkets, right next to the bodice-rippers, Westerns, and biographies of rock stars. So zillions of people are going to find themselves reading a book in which Witchcraft is the force for good. What a revolutionary notion!

Because this book is so much like a conventional horror novel, it's a good way to sneakily introduce mundanes to the Craft. (I loaned my copy to my mother.) I also recommend it to total strangers in bookstores (heh heh).

How come Strieber knows so much about the Craft? Well, he was the co-author of Warday, which was made into a radio drama for NPR. Strieber worked on the radio adaptation with--Margot Adler. (Was that the creak of a broom closet door opening just a crack?)

The magic cat of the title? He's not a cat, not entirely, and he's the old woman's familiar, sort of. He spends a lot of time in the Otherworld.

Read Catmagic, because it's entertaining. Get a deserving mundane to read it, but don't tell them why. And when you're done reading it, donate your copy to the local public library. This sort of propaganda will be invaluable when it's time for us to "come from the shadows".

--Ashta'arArthura  
Proteus Coven, N.Y.

MY FANTASY  
Rita Prince Winston

(This was originally written as a homework assignment for Thalassa kai Oros. The question was "What is an ideal place to do a ritual? What ritual would you like to do there?")

There are many nice places to have rituals, but if I have to limit myself to one (and give myself permission to fantasize), I pick a large, clothing-optional, garden in a quiet suburban neighborhood. There are high walls for privacy, covered with climbing plants, and trees planted in front of them. There is a pleasant lawn for sitting, lying, dancing; flowers for beauty and "nature's incense"; fruit trees to keep us in touch with the agricultural cycle. A suitable tree stump or boulder is an attractive altar in the middle of the lawn. Between the garden and the house is a patio with a firepit for barbecuing Sabbat feasts, a redwood picnic table or two for eating them, and a hot tub for ritual baths.

Sabbat Circles would take place in the garden, in physical touch with the seasons whom we celebrate. Full Moon Circles would take place in the garden, in sight of the Moon whom we celebrate. Sabbat celebrations take all day (better, all weekend, with people sleeping over) in the garden and the house and the patio, with feasting and socializing and guests from outside the coven, and seasonal amusements like hunting Ostara eggs, making Beltane flower crowns, exchanging Yule presents.

The Sabbat ritual itself takes place in daylight, except Samhain, Yule, Candlemas are appropriate for midnight. (A pickier or more sophisticated group could make a mandala with Yule at midnight, Ostara at 6 ayem, Midsummer at noon, and Harvest at six pm. Then Candlemas is three ayem, Beltane nine ayem, Lammas three pm, and Samhain nine pm.) For daylight rituals, bouquets or banners of appropriate colors could be waved at the Watchtowers instead of candles. For nighttime Sabbats, the Circle could be outlined on the ground with garden candles or garden torches. The candles, lit before the beginning of the Samhain ritual, would be extinguished during the ritual and only one re-lit. Only one candle would be lit before the beginning of the Yule ritual, and would light the others during the ritual. All the candles would be lit from before the beginning to after the end of the Candlemas ritual.

The Full Moon Circles would have the purpose of participating in the magick and divinity of the night, the Moon, the Goddess. Covenanters would spirally feedback the sense of the numinous with poetry, chanting, circle dancing around the altar, or scrying in fire, smoke, water, black mirrors. Each in turn would Draw Down the Moon. If the coven consisted of suitable couples, each couple could do the Great Rite (simultaneously). Sometimes the coven would go to a lecture, a party, or another Circle, so doing the Full Moon Circle at 2 ayem. At that time, when most people are asleep, there is a unique vibration of calmness and quiet which adds a new dimension to ritual.

Teaching Circles would also be held in the garden. A storyteller can tell tales of gods and heroes, a herballist can pass around samples, a masseur can advise covenanters who are taking turns to rub each other's back.

FAVORITE GOD, GODDESS, AND MYTH SYSTEM  
Rita Prince Winston

(This was originally written in response to a Question of the Month in Pagan APA. The question was "What is your favorite goddess or god? Favorite pantheon?")

When I first joined P'APA, I unhesitantly said my favorite goddess and god were Ishtar and Tammuz (tho' my favorite statue was the chryselephantine Minoan Snake Goddess). In those days I knew what I meant when I said that. Now I don't really think that Ishtar and Tammuz are my favorite goddess and god (altho' the Snake Goddess is still my favorite visual representation. I have several cheap little statuettes of her and I just spent an extravagant amount of money buying a museum

reproduction of the ceramic statue of her. Even in full size reproduction, the critter on her head looks like a bump. I don't know whether it's an owl or not.) It would help if I knew what "favorite god/dess" meant.

If the question were my favorite male god, I could easily fake up an answer. Last year the Pallas Society News called for articles on male gods ("aspects of the God", in their terminology), and I immediately responded with an article on Poseidon. I could easily say that Poseidon is my favorite god; when I was a kid I used to hang out with him beside the boat canal at Marina del Rey. Those nasty things the mythographers say about him are all lies. However, I've never worked with him in rituals, except Proteus once did a ritual "for the Sea Lords and Ladies", and once in great while I invite him to ward my Western Watchtower.

Why is he my favorite? Go down to the beach and look at the ocean and the waves. How can anyone not love the Sea? My favorites goddesses also are the Ones with the moon and stars in her hair and the waves are the frill at the hem of her robe.

I responded again with an article on Osiris - I mean, on Nuit and Geb and Isis and Osiris and Nephthys and Set and Horus and Anubis and Thoth and Hathor and Ra and Sekhmet and Ptah. Osiris is an important god to me, the very image of the Mysteries (the mummy with grain sprouting in the wrappings), and I give him pride of place with I name the gods of cut grain at Lammas, and once in a very great while I invite him to ward my Northern Watchtower.

Mythological systems: the Greek stories and Roman names are the most known Pagan mythology in our culture. I would have said that the Greek myths and Roman names (I use the Greek names, because the Roman names are planets) were known to all educated people, except that from Samhain '85 to just recently, I was blessed with a coven of people who didn't know the Greek myths (or any others), and were reluctant to learn them. (The true Least Common Denominator mythology is to speak simply of Mother Earth, Maiden Moon, Grain God, etc.) I don't actually like Greek mythology that much, but I speak it because it's the language with which I was raised.

Egyptian mythology is also pretty well known (King Tut made it fashionable). Egyptian mythology is drenched with bright sunlight and brilliant starlight, which is a comfort on cold days and overcast nights, and has something of everything. Gentle mother goddess? Fierce warrior goddess? Queen of Heaven? Playful Cat? Dying God? Sun God? All are there. One thing I like about Egyptian mythology is ~~the~~ ~~initials~~ that the Egyptians were content to leave it in a somewhat disorganised and inconsistent state. Reality is somewhat disorganised and inconsistent. The Greeks organised their mythology so thoroughly that it seems more like a literary exercise than like a reflection of reality.

#### THE BULL IS FATHER OF THE SERPENT, THE SERPENT IS FATHER OF THE BULL

THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES quotes the above symbolon (mystic formula uttered in a Mystery) from Clement of Alexandria and other early Christian propagandists. Clement claimed that it referred to Zeus taking the form of a bull to seduce Demeter and father Persephone, who, being earthy, was serpent-like, and then taking the form of a serpent to seduce Persephone and father Dionysus, often referred to as "the young bull". This is fine, altho' it refers to the Orphic version rather than the normal version of the story of the birth of Dionysus, but the instant I read that symbolon, I remembered that, back when the Spring Equinox took place in Taurus, the Fall Equinox took place in Scorpio (one of whose symbols is a serpent). And Joseph Campbell's description of Mithraic initiation (in THE MASKS OF GOD) mentions two assistants: one carries a torch pointing up, the other a torch pointing down, to symbolize the cyclic flow of energy between the divine unity and the world of ten thousand things. Or sometimes, said Campbell, the two assistants carried a bull's head and a scorpion instead of torches.

I feel that this serpent and bull, like the Oak King and Holly King, like yin and yang, show the ebb and swell of life-energy in the circle of the year.

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NEXT ISSUE

Next ish will appear around Ostara '88 and deadline will be very early in March '88. Some people begin to perceive a pattern.

LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

Valerie Voigt writes (on stationery with a beautiful illustration of a many breasted goddess):

"...You probably won't hear from either of us much, as Zephyr [Starwater] works two jobs and I am always swamped with mothering, teaching, HPSing, and coordinating various Pagan organizations and activities (Pagan/Occult/Witchcraft Special Interest Group is 350 people by itself -- rather unwieldy -- and I'm active in COG, Centre of the Divine Ishtar, South Bay Craft Teachers, and some other groups).

One bit of information that might be of interest to other Proteans is about South Bay Circles. SBC is a local (South Bay area) legally-registered association of covens of various traditions. It exists to organize and perform the Sabbat Festivals for the South Bay Pagan community. The Sabbats aren't open -- that is, all comers welcome -- but rather invitational. Member covens provide their guests written invitations which serve as admission slips, thus providing a measure of control over who attends. Guests are the responsibility of their inviters, which has resulted in good behavior by all, so far. Attendance at the Sabbats runs between 70 and 115, with 9 covens and their guests participating. Covens take turns presiding.

South Bay Circles was the brain-child of two priests of Proteus lineage: Robin Blackhood (formerly of Coven Beannacht Dana-an, now of Circle Lia Fail, a Gardnerian-led training Circle) and David Tower (formerly of Coven Beannacht Dana-an, now of New Broom, an eclectic coven). Other Proteids involved in the founding of SBC were Lady Bettin (HPS, Coven Beannacht Dana-an), Brendan (then HP of the now-defunct Circle of Our Lady of the Wild Oak Way, now of Circle Lia Fail), Nina (ex-BD, now New Broom), Dominic (then of Wild Oak Way, now solitary), myself (ditto), and Autumn (acting HPS, Lia Fail). Proteids are very active in the South Bay Pagan community, and SBC is a successful organization.

I hope to hear what other Proteids are doing. (I am saying "Proteids" because it means "Children of Proteus": if I called us "Proteans" it might sound like we're all members of Proteus Coven.)...

P.S. It occurs to me that what I have written of myself above may be confusing: In one place I mention that I am HPSing, later I describe myself as solitary. I am normally solitary in my Gardnerian work. I am, however, also a full initiate in the Fairy Tradition (initiated by Victor Anderson) and am HPSing a training Circle in that tradition. I am also one of the founding Elders of Waxing Moon Circle, an eclectic semi-open Esbat Circle in Palo Alto. Although I retired from Waxing Moon's HPS office a couple of years ago, having turned the office over to capable Celtic initiate Marilyn, I am still active in that Circle and occasionally help Marilyn in directing rituals."

-----Valerie Voigt, POB 9494, San Jose CA 95157

Rita here. Just READING about all Valerie's activities makes me feel tired! In that list of Proteids involved with SBC, Valerie carefully wrote by hand the degree mark after each name. I'm much too lazy to do that. I don't think I know ANY of those Proteids. Someone should tell all of them to send me their mailing addresses so I can send them PS.

Valerie mentioned POWSIG, but didn't mention that she is editor of PAGANA (and sent me a number of her and Zephyr's articles to reprint). PAGANA is a very well known Paganzine. I checked their ad in HARVEST for order info: PAGANA, 6 ish/yr, \$12/yr or \$2/sample. PO Box 9336 San Jose CA 95157, make checks to POWSIG.

While I'm plugging zines, I have a regular column in Pallas Society News (I write most of my articles for them). Quarterly on the Greater Sabbats, \$7/yr, PO Box 2015, 1800 S. Robertson LA CA 90035.

#### PAGAN CHARITY

Geneva Hagen, who as far as I know is not a Proteid, is founding CERES: Convocation of Earth Religions to End Starvation. Their long-term goal is to end human starvation on Earth; their current projects include writing letters to politicians about the Ethiopian famine and collecting money for UNICEF.

I believe that the importance of charity is self-evident. It'd better be, because I'm no good at preaching sermons. However, some people might wonder "Why a Pagan charity, when there are so many good secular charities, like UNICEF?" Geneva writes: "I believe that with our attunement to the Earth and Her natural cycles, and our technology of changing consciousness through ritual, Pagans are in a position to make a unique contribution to their work." She has mentioned reforestation as a future project. I am less idealistic: think what an effective Pagan charity will do to make Paganism respectable!

C.E.R.E.S.'s address is c/o Geneva Hagen  
R.R. 1, Kispiox Road  
Site L, Compartment 21  
Hazelton BC V0J 1Y0  
Canada

I was about to suggest that it would be polite to include an SASE (postage for answering letters of inquiry can add up fast), but I just remembered that Canada is a foreign country. Maybe money would be easier.

#### THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR: SEASONS AND SABBATS

One day a covenbrother was reminiscing. He'd been raised in a little farm town in the Midwest. His father sold farm equipment and his uncles planted by the moon, as instructed by the Old Farmers' Almanac. He was accustomed to winter snow and spring sprouts. In Sunday School, they taught him about Christmas and Easter, saying that Jesus Christ died for our sins.

Not until he graduated from college, moved to New York City, discovered the Craft, did he put two things together in his mind: "I realised that Jesus had risen in the spring."

Ha-Ha, I said. I'd been raised Unitarian in Los Angeles, and my Sunday School was careful to teach that Easter and Pesach began as Pagan Spring Equinox celebrations. Easter flowers and Pesach green herbs, Easter colored eggs and Pesach roasted egg, lambs for both....Easter, they told me, had been named after the Teutonic fertility goddess Eostara, whose symbol was a rabbit "for obvious reasons". Jesus, like Attis, symbolised the returning vegetation.

Christmas and Hannukkah, they told me, were Pagan Winter Solstice celebrations. Christmas tree lights and menorah candles for a festival of light, lengthening days in the winter darkness, present giving inherited from Roman Saturnalia, the tree from Saxon tree worship. The birth of Jesus, like that of Mithra, represented the new year of sunlight.

Thus, I knew that Jesus had risen in the Spring. But until I moved to New York, I didn't know what Spring was.

Our Craft, our Sabbats, our Wheel of the Year, connect a lot of things together. The experience of the changing seasons, the seasons of a human life, interior psychological seasons of joy and grief, a divine myth, the Divinity immanent in All. I suppose we are all already familiar with the myths I'm speaking of: the Dying God (of vegetation or of sunlight), the Persephone, Adonis, or Tammuz, who is born or returns with the spring at Candlemas, Ostara or Beltane, and dies or departs with the fall, at Lammas, Harvest, or Samhain. The intense death-and-rebirth experience of Yule, which is both the death day of the old Sun and the birthday of the new Sun. Or spread the story over the entire year, so for example the Sun God could be born at Yule, weaned at Candlemas, reach puberty at Ostara, marry the Earth Goddess at Beltane, be coronated at Midsummer, be wounded at Lammas, die at Harvest, be in the Summerland at Samhain, and be born again at Yule.

Finding psychological and spiritual insights in myths about the agricultural seasons is in the tradition of the Hellenistic Mystery Religions. I just ran across this great book: THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES: A SOURCEBOOK by Marvin W. Meyer (Harper and Row 1987). It is a collection of (English translations of) the contemporary Greek and Roman writing about the Mystery Religions from which modern scholars have figured out their theories about the Mysteries. The texts are very interesting for people who're interested in that sort of thing (which I am), but the book also has an Introduction, which explains the social-historical background of the Mystery Religions and what these different religions had in common so that they are all categorized together as Mystery Religions. I recommend that all Witches should go read this Introduction, because most of it is an amazingly accurate description of us in our covens. I'd like to quote the whole Introduction, but I'll limit myself to one paragraph which is relevant to my topic:

"The development of early agrarian or fertility festivals into the mystery religions involved, first and foremost, the conviction on the part of the worshippers that the cycle of nature related directly to human life. Plants and animals participated in a cycle of death and life, and so also did human beings. Death came to all the divine forces of nature -- Kore, Dionysus, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, the Mithraic bull -- but finally life was victorious. Kore returned from the realm of Hades; Dionysus vivified his devotees; Adonis rose from the dead; Attis gave an intimation of new life; Osiris reigned as king of the underworld; and the bull provided life for the world. Hence, if human beings could assimilate the power that made life triumphant in the world of nature, they too could live in a more complete way."

But the experience of the changing seasons is different in different climates. The celebration of the eight Sabbats is flexible enough to fit a range of climates; Oimelc (Imbolg, Brigid, Candlemas, February Eve) can be a spring festival or a midwinter encouragement, thanksgiving for agricultural harvest suits Lammas (Lughnasadh, August Eve), Fall Equinox (Harvest, Mabon), and Samhain (Hallows, November Eve). Still, some climates are very different. When we mourn Persephone's departure on Samhain, do we remember that the Ancient Greeks (her own people) celebrated her return at Autumn Equinox? The dry summer was the dead season: they planted in the fall to harvest in June. I think Southern Californians, rainy season and dry season, might be able to relate to that.

For some years, I've been wondering about the cycle of seasons in SoCal. I think I have an idea of the order of seasons, but not of their timing. To begin with sprouting seeds: first is the rainy season. There are storms, which are cold and wet and nasty, but when it rains the hillsides turn green. The rain washes the sky clean and the wind blows the smog away and between storms are warm days of bright skies and clear sunshine. The winds stop, and the rain, and first fog settles, then scuzz, and I can't see the mountains anymore.

The sun gets hotter, then vegetation dries out, and it's fire season. The winds return, blowing sparks across hastily enlarged fire breaks. Fire is a necessary part of the local ecology, as the seeds of many native plants won't germinate until they've been through a fire. This is an evolutionary adaptation to help the new little plants start their growth in a cleared and available space with less competition. The Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History has a new permanent exhibit, The Hall of Chapparal, with a nice movie about the life cycle of native plants, beginning and ending with fire. Lightning set fires before human beings ever moved here, and the smoke from those fires was smog in the inversion layer.

The fires over, the winds remain, to bring negative ions and old buried disease germs from the deserts, making everyone irritable. In parts of Europe, a similar wind is named scirocco or mistral, and I've heard that in Germany, a possible plea in murder trials is "innocent by reason of mistral". We just joke about the santa annas. After a while it rains again, and the hillsides turn green.

I have read in books about seasonal celebrations in other desert climates. In THE WITCH'S WAY by Stuart and Janet Farrar, the chapter "In Tune With the Land" shows a six-Sabbat Wheel of the Year published in an Australian Pagan magazine. I translated it to the Northern Hemisphere calendar and found: Dec 21 Rain Festival, Feb 15 Rainbow Festival, Apr 15 Beltane, June 21 Harvest Festival, Aug 15 Halloween, Oct 15 Green Tide Festival.

I don't suggest that we all immediately rush to observe this calendar, because SoCal is a different desert than Australia and might have different seasons, and because I am very attached to an eight Sabbat Wheel of the Year. I like to feel that I'm celebrating at pretty much the same time as all my sister and brother Witches all over the world, even tho' we're celebrating different things, so I want to celebrate Spring and Fall Equinox as well as Winter and Summer Solstice, and mark the Quarter Days as the first of February, May, August, and November (altho' there are arguments to celebrate the Quarter Days on the fifths or fifteenthths of those months: the fifths because of the Sun's astrological position, the fifteenthths because what is now the fifteenth is what used to be the first in the Julian ("Old Style") calendar used when our ancestors invented these holidays).

Still, it can be useful to consider this model. To me, celebrating Winter Solstice as a Rain Festival sounds very right. February Eve is also often part of the Rainy Season, altho' I don't think "Rainbow Festival" is particularly relevant to Southern California: we don't go in much for rainbows, so a friend of mine who is a fourth generation Angelena, altho' not a Pagan, suggested "Fog Festival" instead.

Summer Solstice can be considered a Harvest Festival, since such a variety and abundance of fruit is in season. The idea of August Eve as Samhain bothers me, but this calendar also has Moon names, and the August Full Moon is named Wild Fire Moon. That's true here!

I've read another book with something to say about seasons in a desert climate: SEASONS OF OUR JOY by Arthur Waskow, which is about Jewish holidays. I'm not recommending that Witches should rush to observe Jewish holidays just because Israel is a desert, but I feel that we can learn by analogy from people who are similar to us in some ways and different from us in some ways. Similar? Waskow explains that his study of his holidays is rooted in the chavurah movement, chavurot being small congregations who meet to worship and study together as equals and intimates; they sit in circles facing each other instead of in auditorium rows facing a hired rabbi. Waskow emphasizes that the year is a circle and the holidays, "the points along the circle", are built on cycles of the sun and of the moon. He explains that each holiday has a mood which relates to the seasonal events of nature and to the spiritual (psychological) experiences of human individuals as well as to the history of the Jewish people (their equivalent of our divine myths).

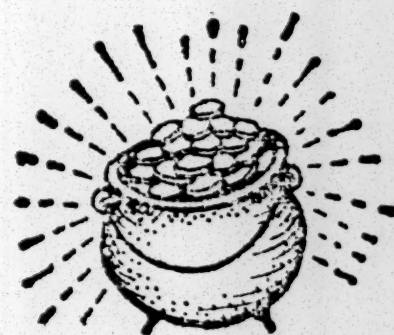
At the moment I am concentrating strictly on the nature festival aspect. There are four holidays which Waskow emphasizes as seasonal: Pesach (Passover) is a spring festival, timed to take place on the Full Moon after Spring Equinox. Solar-lunar calendars being what they are, that means any time between Ostara and Beltane. It may have begun as the combination of a celebration of the barley harvest and a celebration of the lambing season (note: this city slicker was under the impression that sheep had their babies in February. Anybody know for sure?). Fifty days later (between Beltane and Midsummer) is Shavuot (Weeks or Pentecost), a holiday of early summer which may have begun as a combination of a celebration of the wheat harvest and a celebration of the lambs being weaned.

Sukkot (Tabernacles, Booths, Huts), the Full Moon after the Autumn Equinox, is a harvest celebration and a celebration of living outdoors in lovely warm autumn weather. The winter festival doesn't take place in midwinter, when travelling would be difficult because of rain and mud: it is the eighth day of Sukkot, called Shemini Atzerat. It marks the beginning of the rainy season, when people start praying for rain (praying for rain during the dry season would be against nature, so then Jews pray for dew). Apparently Sukkot used long ago also to include the solar fire aspects which have since moved to Hannukkah.

I mention these holidays for the sake of culture shock: three harvest seasons, one each in spring, summer, and fall. Winter welcomed as prayed-for rain. No observance of Winter Solstice. However, the pattern is not systematically alien. Spring has lambs and eggs along with the barley harvest. Autumn has harvest along with the warm weather. A Winter Solstice holiday popped up a mere two thousand years ago.

## Brigid Poem

always the flame within  
 always the flame within  
 sometimes tiny and dim  
 like a distant star on a foggy night  
 but always the flame within  
 sometimes a warm bright glow  
 shining among other lanterns  
 exchanging our lights among ourselves  
 always the flame within  
 always the flame within  
 sometimes at the touch of a thought  
 blazing up in a column of radiance  
 too hot, too bright for sight  
 consuming me utterly with its power  
 but always the flame within  
 I am heated and hammered  
 quenched and tempered  
 on the forge of the flame within  
 always the flame within  
 I signal in pulses of meaning  
 across the lightless void  
 with the flicker of the flame within  
 always the flame within  
 and life is sustained  
 light is sustained  
 mind is sustained  
 by the flame within  
 always the flame within  
 always the flame within  
 always the flame within.



Ashta'ar Arthura

### WHAT ALL WITCHES BELIEVE

Sunshine Starsilver

Federation Space Academy, Berkeley, California

reprinted from *Pagana* #31, All-Fools '86

Although there is a lot of diversity in the Craft, all Witches have certain shared insights. My purpose here is to outline the most basic of those insights.

1. Witchcraft is Celtic in origin.
2. Witchcraft is, first and foremost, a Goddess religion.
3. All Goddesses are one Goddess, all Gods are one God, and there is one Initiator.
4. The different Goddesses and Gods all represent universal Jungian archetypes.
5. All modern Witchcraft stems from Gerald Gardner.
6. Magic is the art of changing consciousness at will.
7. Witches respect the great spiritual insights of Aleister Crowley.
8. Crowley taught, "Do As Thou Wilt Shall Be the Whole of the Law." This means that you can do anything you want to do, any time.
9. Witches are anti-hierarchical.
10. Witches are non-judgemental.
11. Therefore, no Witch should ever presume to question anyone else's claim to be a Witch; nor should any Witch presume to judge the ethics of another Witch, or the theology or practices of another Witch.
12. You create your own reality.
13. There is no objective reality, only subjective reality, and everybody has the right to their reality.
14. All Witches are basically nice people.
15. Witches do not have anything in common with Satanists.
16. Witches oppose nuclear power because it is unecological.
17. Witches are feminists.
18. Because the Charge of the Goddess says, "All acts of love and pleasure are My rituals," Witches encourage whatever kind of sexual activity a person is interested in.
19. Witches do only good magic.
20. You can be a Witch without doing magic of any kind.
21. If you call yourself a Witch, you are one. Self-initiation is valid.
22. Witches believe that drugs are a good method of experiencing mystical consciousness.
23. There is no dogma or dogmatism of any kind in the Craft.

### CULTS, THE OCULT, AND MINORITY RELIGION

Valerie Voigt

reprinted from *Pagana* #5, Lammas '81

The word "Cult" is much bandied about nowadays, and since the mass murder in Guyana, the rise of "deprogramming", and various scandals surrounding Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church ("Moonies"), the Church of Scientology, and ISKCON (the "Hare Krishnas"), the general public seems ready to interpret any unfamiliar religious (or sometimes even social) group as a potential Manson Family. This holds particularly true in the case of non-Christian groups, despite the fact that the People's Temple was (and is) a Christian organization, as is the Unification Church.

What is a "cult," anyway? Well, the word comes from the Latin word colere (supine form, cultus), which means, "to worship" or "to cultivate" (indeed, the word "cultivate" also derives from colere).

Thus, etymologically, as well as historically, cult is simply worship, and forms of worship, with the word applying by extension to those people (both individuals and groups) who practice them. By this definition, then, any religion is a cult and virtually every cult is a religion: this is fine, but it doesn't help us much in our attempt to understand the phenomenon we see around us.

In practice, the word "cult" has at least three definitions in common usage:

1. A small religion: for example, Christianity in its early days; the Mormons; or the modern Craft.

2. A weird religion (by whatever definition of "weird" the speaker likes at the time): Voodoo, Hinduism, Satanism, the Craft, Sufism, Nazism, Druidism, Zen, Fundamentalism, etc. (depending upon your tastes).

3. A fanatical religion (one which feels it has the One, True, Right, and Only Way and/or feels it has the right to coerce belief): for example, the Unification Church, the medieval Roman Catholic Church, People's Temple, some Christian and Moslem Fundamentalist sects, Maoism, etc.

Some religions (People's Temple is a fine example) may fit all 3 of these definitions, while others (such as the Craft or Fundamentalism) do not. Confusion over this word and its several possible meanings has muddled people's thoughts and discussions of a very real danger.

Smallness would not seem to make a religion dangerous. "Weirdness" is mostly in the eye of the beholder, and very hard to define. I will, nevertheless, return to both later. What I wish to examine now is the third aspect, fanaticism.

A religion which claims to have the One Truth has defined itself as its own justification. This allows such a religion to commit what in most other contexts would be unthinkable: for example, the torture and extermination of Witches (medieval Catholicism), heretics (Reformation Calvinism), Jews (Nazism), or its own devotees (People's Temple). It is not, I suspect, accidental that most of the glaring examples of genocide were fostered by monotheistic religions (for a fuller discussion of this, see Margot Adler's introduction to her book, Drawing Down the Moon, Beacon Press). Nor is it by chance that I have included Nazism and Maoism in this discussion: Anyone familiar with the histories of these two movements is aware of the sometimes thin, sometimes nonexistent dividing line between religious and political belief systems, for which reason I point out the obvious: that much of what applies to religious "cults" applies also to political ones. (Sometimes, as with modern Iran or the so-called "Moral Majority," the distinction does not exist at all.)

Some fanatical groups are relatively open (for example, many Christian fundamentalist groups), while others are more closed, or even secretive (e.g. People's Temple or the Moonies). More secretive groups will often attempt to isolate themselves from outside sources. In most cases, the primary goal is the follower's abrogation of his/her own will in favor of the leader's; likewise the follower often gives all power and property to the leader or the group.

Often, the leader promotes an "us-versus-them" mentality, emphasizing the group's smallness or differentness in order to paint the picture of a beleaguered-but-righteous small group struggling against an "evil" or "contaminated" society. Even when the group is not so small, the idea of a continuous state of siege is often encouraged. The follower is given a sense of belonging to a select group of golden holy warriors. In addition the leader often brings into play a variety of psychological persuasion (or "brainwashing") techniques.

By now you have noticed that I haven't mentioned any occult groups in this article. Why not? Surely they exist?

I have little doubt that occult "cults" (in this last and most dangerous sense of the word) exist. Unfortunately, I am not sure I really know of any of them. I hear rumors, but have never been able to prove them. But I can discuss one "cult" that seems to have come close: the Manson Family. Whether Manson and his Family had (and have) a clear and definite theology is difficult to determine from the glut of sensationalist material printed about them. It appears, however, from Helter Skelter and such court testimony as was printed in newspapers, that Manson spoke of a god or fallen angel he called Lucifer, and of a separate being, Satan, and also of Christ and Jehovah. He and his family envisioned an ultimate apocalyptic battle between Light and Darkness (represented by Caucasians and Negros, respectively; whether he identified these dichotomies with good and evil is unclear) in which Manson would be the Anti-Christ. The family seems to have tried to practice sex magic, apparently in order to raise power as a group. The details are rather obscure, but the Manson group seems to have drawn on Christianity, potboiler Satanism, and an esoterically mixed bag of occult practices.

Similarly, Hitler drew on Nietzsche; ISKCON draws on the Bhagavad-Gita; and Jim Jones drew, as Falwell now draws, on the Bible. Clearly then the source of a group's mythos is not a determining factor in its danger. The leader-follower relationship itself seems much more important.

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss individual groups; and, anyway, the final judgement is for the individual reader. I say this: To be an entire person, to be your real self, you cannot turn your will over to someone else. Ultimately, you must take responsibility for yourself.

#### To Brigit on Her day

Brigit, this time of year I stay within  
My warm room if I can. Outside the old,  
Dark, dirty slush piles deep; the dismal wind  
Pierces all garments. Everything is cold.

Nature rejects me now. Or is it I,  
Rebellious child and spoiled, who seeks the warm  
Furnace, the radiator's soothing sigh,  
To mute my Mother's voice aroused in storm?

Brigit, the trees are bare and shivering now,  
But hot the forge of human mind and heart.  
The cold time turns us inward to allow  
Discoveries of comradeship and art.

Poetry, healing, smithcraft: human skill.  
Indoors as out, we live by Nature's Will!

Judy Harrow



LETTER FROM ROWEN (edited for space)

Dear Protean Synthesis,

There's a saying, attributed to Witches, that "in fear there is power" or "where there's fear, there's power". This seems to fit with Dana Morgan's notes. It's well known that under certain circumstances, a person is able to exceed all expected limits -- the mother picking up the car off her child is the standard example. (A very strong aspect of the Mother!) Hysterical strength, right? Well, doesn't that word -- "hysterical" -- denote insanity and flakiness? Fear is a standard trigger for hysteria, but the body's metabolism can cause insanity, hysteria, and/or fear, just by not working right. The only poltergeists recorded well have been in households with adolescents...and isn't puberty a time of insanity caused by hormonal changes?

Not surprisingly, I see the best proof in myself. In my childhood, I had a fair power -- insanity from wrong foods and a nasty home life. I crested at puberty -- small stuff, like blowing out a neighbor's stereo, and some weather control. It has steadily reduced as [forming my own home, and eating to suit my allergies] have all made my life more sane and comfortable and healthy.

Yet, yesterday, when I was unable to get my iodine/calcium supplement for the 3rd day, I "lost" it a bit: a happy one, but the energy was all over, bubbling out. The whole place where I work seemed to be happier. And I fugued on the way home, lost an hour and half. Yuck.

I think that I'd rather be able to call up hysteria/insanity when I want/need to (bet that's what the Christian Scientists use) by ritual and mind state alteration and maybe a very minor food adjustment, and be healthy and happy the rest of the time, but there is no doubt in my mind/body that "flakiness" and power are connected, or that one's metabolism (through puberty's hormones, allergies, or regular fluctuations) can create useful levels of power through "flakiness"/ insanity/hysteria. Maybe that's why virgins are supposed to be more powerful? Not innocence, but frustration?

Maybe Pagans with conditions which cause "flakiness" have noticed it more as a result of watching their powers rise and fall? Maybe they became Pagan because they had these powers that they wouldn't have had if they'd been healthier? I like the second theory better.

By the way, what is a tryglyceride condition?

[Rita here. Sometimes I suspect that the reason I meet so many flakes at Paganfests is that Witchcrafts really is as crazy as normal people think it is. On other tentacles, several recent studies have found that mania-depression is prevalent in creative geniuses -- if the people are creative to start with, the manic phase gives them the energy to act on their creative ideas -- and there was an article in the latest HIPPOCRATES about a condition called "thin barriers" which characterizes insane people and also people who remember their dreams, creative people, feminists, and basically all the kinds of people whom I consider worth knowing.

I LOVED Judy's article on Khazar religion.

Concerning eczema: I have something I've been told is keratin: dry skin at some of the major joints. When it gets bad, I put a lip-balm on it twice a day. It keeps it moist enough so that the flesh heals and gets soft again, peeling off the dry stuff. Lip balm works well for staying on top of the flesh. I usually use a "health food" type with aloe vera, PABA, etc. or A and D ointment.

[Rita here. I had the same thing as a child. Pond's cold cream and/or Vaseline worked fine. Rubbed in THOROUGHLY. I haven't had it since I was 18 or so.]

One of the workshops at Merrymeet discussed "safe cakes and wine", both for allergies/alcoholics and for "too many mouths on the ale glass" leading to flu, etc. Among the ideas shared were: go for 1 or 2 foods that are almost totally non-allergenic [there ain't no such thing! -- Rita] (carrot sticks and Ashta'ar's recipe from PS#2?), or put four different foods one at each Watchtower. Anyway, the food problem is easier than the liquid problem, because of the germ factor. One can use two or more different liquids -- say, wine or ale, in a cup, because the alcohol kills the germs [does it? -- Rita], then water, tea, fruit juice, or milk. A problem is that water is the only one you can count on to be non-allergenic.

Anyway, what about germs? 1) alcohol: not for everybody. 2) turn the glass: works as well as the rhythm method of birth control. 3) Give everyone a cup, and have some poured in each cup, and have some way of collecting and cleaning or throwing away hundreds of cups after a large public ritual. 5) use a Boda bag: carry it around and squirt in people's mouths, or on their fancy ritual robes.... 6) my latest idea: a wine thief. It's something like a pipette, narrow at the ends, thick in the middle, and over a foot long. One end is small enough to cover with a finger, the other is slightly larger and tapered. Because of the taper, it pours, rather than spilling like a pipette....A turkey baster would probably work as well, but would look less spiffy. 7) serve grapes or watermelon chunks as the liquid, prepackaged by Mother Nature.

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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FROM THE EDITOR

This is the Ostara '88 issue. I anticipate that next issue will appear for Beltane '88 and the deadline will be just before the middle of April. As usual, I reserve the right to be arbitrary about deadlines and every thing else.

Since this is February 20 and there is quite a long time 'til Beltane, it is possible that I might have an unexpected burst of energy and put out a special issue before the Beltane ish.

One thing that would make that burst of energy more likely is if you folks send me a lot of material. As usual, PS welcomes -- say, rather, pleads for -- articles, reviews, poetry, non-secret ritual material, reprints, letters, and funny cartoons. No one has sent me any cartoons at all yet.

The material in this issue includes a reprint of an article by Merydedd that appeared in CONVERGING PATHS (BTW, does anyone know the name of Merydedd's coven?) and a response by Judy which is going to appear in CONVERGING PATHS.

I have been subscribing to C P for several months, and I think it is a very good zine even tho' the editors are not (as far as I know) Proteids. If you're interested: CONVERGING PATHS, PO Box 63, Mt Horeb WI 53572, \$13/yr (4 issues).

They call themselves a zine of "Traditional Wicca", meaning Witches who practise Traditions, for example the Gardnerian Tradition. This raises a question (or answer) about us Proteids. I have a habit of describing Proteus Coven as Gardnerian in lineage and Eclectic in practise, because they use the Gardnerian initiations and initiates study the Gardnerian Book Of

Shadows as part of their heritage, but Sabbat and Esbat rituals are each time created afresh or researched from all different places. This results in a kaleidoscopic effect, lots of different liturgical styles and mythic images. This puts Proteus in the fence-straddling position of being both Eclectic and Traditional, which some of the writers in CONVERGING PATHS appear to find offensive.

Rumor has it that some covens of the Protean lineage are Gardnerian and much more Traditional in their practice, while I am proudly Protean, but not Gardnerian. I am very fond of kaleidoscopes (I own three, and other glittery prismatic toys), and certainly an Eclectic.

I seem to have been distracted in the midst of begging. I was about to plea for your mailing addresses. It is possible that some of you think: "I'll do Rita a favor, I'll save her some money on postage by reading my friend's copy of PS."

I appreciate the good intention, but that is the same kind of favor as the guy who saves me some money on concert tickets by buying the last tickets to a thus sold-out show by my favorite band. I'd rather spend the money, thank you.

I also know that many Proteids are awesomely busy. It really doesn't take that long to address a postcard to PROTEAN SYNTHESIS, Rita Prince Winston, and my address from the masthead. Then if you just write your mailing address in the space where the message goes, I think I'll be able to figure out why someone is sending an address to PS.

If the problem is you can't afford a stamp, borrow one and tell me so and I will send you a pretty stamp with a cat on it to pay back your lender.

PASTORS, MINISTERS, OR CLERGY  
by  
Meredydd

pas-tor n. A Christian minister who is the leader of a congregation. [Lat. shepherd]

min-is-ter n. 1. A person authorized to perform religious functions in a church. v. To attend to the wants and needs of others. [Lat. servant]

cler-gy n. The body of people ordained for religious service. [Ofr. clergie, learning]

[from the American Heritage Dictionary]

It is a commonly held belief that all Witches are clergy, ordained priests and priestesses with all the rights and responsibilities of other ministers. Out of a wish to stimulate discussion and consideration of this idea, I would like to offer a few paragraphs of my own thoughts on this matter.

What makes a clergyperson? In most denominations in the United States it is a seminary education of some sort, wherein the candidate for ordination learns Scripture, history, languages, logic, rhetoric, homiletics [how to preach], exegesis [the art of commenting on Scripture], and hermeneutics [the art of Scriptural interpretation]. All of this presupposes, of course, that the religion is Scripturally based, whether that Scripture be the Torah, the Bible, the Gita, or the Lotus Sutra. The period of study is between two and four years. A thesis or dissertation may be required. In many seminaries, rigorous academic standards apply and each and every assumption that candidates for ordination have when they enter is systematically examined, challenged, and evaluated. Candidates are often taught the basics of crisis counseling, and serve internships wherein they act as clergy for a period in a congregation of their faith.

What makes a Witch? In many covens of various Traditions, it is an apprenticeship which involves almost no book work, no philosophy or logic or science, and precious little discussion. In some

covens there is a more rigorous course of study, involving some basic science, some thaumaturgy and theurgy, and perhaps a little debate. Theology may never be discussed, because many Witches think it anathema to require coveners to believe anything. Social responsibility and ecology are pertinent topics, but spirituality is taboo. The interpretation of sacred texts is irrelevant, for after all, we have no sacred texts to interpret. Homiletics are useless because we do not proselytize. We don't teach counseling, because that's a different discipline and unlicensed counselors run afoul of the law. Internships are unnecessary; any Elder is considered competent to start a coven, or they would not have been elevated.

Reprinted from CONVERGING PATHS.  
Winter Solstice '87

So how does that make us compare to our fellows in other faiths? Their arguments frustrate us because we do not know enough of their language to answer them. Their reasoning is a mystery because we have not their command of logic. Their rhetoric is more persuasive because they are practiced apologists. Our coveners who need counseling wind up on their schedules, because we have, as a religion, nothing to offer them, and their wives or husbands or parents have taken them to the only resource available.

Do we make a concerted effort to learn about spirituality, about liturgy, about religious history or the techniques of persuasion? Is this as important to us as memorizing a system of color correspondences or studying the Tarot? Do we create exciting, stimulating and memorable liturgical experiences for our covens? Do we present them with ideas that challenge their assumptions and force them to defend their moral, ethical, and spiritual stances? Do we offer them a hand extended in love when they are in need, in trouble, in crisis?

Recently a priestess of my acquaintance had a problem in her coven with a member who was foolish in his use of chemicals, endangered his livelihood, and began to lie to his coven brothers and sisters. When her Queen, who was the only one aware of this, told her about it, her response was, "Fine, if he doesn't want to come to meetings he doesn't have to."

His energy has been lousy lately anyway." No expression of concern, no questions of assistance, no offer of counsel. Just good bye.

Another priest, some years ago, had a problem with chemical dependency. He reached out to us, and we weren't there. No programs for addictions were available in the Pagan community; indeed, excess was the rule and intoxication on various substances commonplace, even in ritual. He went to one of the Twelve Step groups (such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and others) and found each meeting closed with Christian liturgy. He was frustrated and angry. He left the Pagan community with a storm of recriminations and went back to the arms of the Church of his childhood, where at least he could find help for his disease.

Perhaps it is time we re-evaluated the idea that every Witch is clergy, or a minister, or a pastor. Certainly, in the narrow definitions with which I opened this discussion we are -- but in light of the standard of practice in the wider religious community, are we?

## Competency and the Craft: a training model

Meredydd's essay is an important challenge and one I think the Craft must take very seriously. I don't have four years of seminary training - and I certainly don't know as much about theology, history, textual analysis or many other things as I might know if I did. Most mainstream churches and synagogues are lead by graduates of seminaries. Is it honest for me to call myself "clergy?"

I think the appropriate response to this challenge is to start to figure out what "clergy" means in our own terms. Then we can see whether we do or do not qualify. If not, we can either stop making the claim - or start living up to it.

For me personally, the choice is shaped by tradition. At the very end of the initiation that we use, the new initiate is presented again to the quarters, this time as a "priest/ess and Witch." As long as I intend to keep making that declaration to the Gods and to the community, I intend to do my best to make it honestly. So it becomes important to me that the people I initiate be committed and prepared to function as clergy for our community. That's why Proteus Coven - and, I hope, all the daughters - tends to be so demanding.

There were also other, more secular, influences on me, and I would like to share them here. I was a student in a Masters degree program in Counseling from September, 1975 through May, 1979. To put that in context, here are some more dates. First subscription to a Pagan magazine: September, 1975. First Circle attended: Samhain, 1976. Initiation: September, 1977. Started my own study group, which was eventually to become Proteus Coven: Midsummer, 1980. What I'm saying is that my professional training and my Craft training happened in parallel and were always mutually reinforcing.

The educational trend at the time I was in grad school was called "competency based education." The idea was that it was not important how many books we had read or even understood, or how many facts we could recite back. Abstract, theoretical knowledge was sometimes a means, never an end in itself. What our teachers cared about was what we could do, our actual, demonstrated counseling skills. This is where the notion came from of making people do a Sabbat Circle as a demonstration of competence before initiation.

I also worked for about a year as an Occupational Analyst with the Job Service - this was the same year Proteus was getting started. Occupational Analysts are people who research various jobs, defining exactly what skills are involved and what training is required. And I do think Meredydd is correct: being clergy is a job - real, meaningful, worthwhile work that makes a difference - even though we do it for love and not for money.

Before any of us can design a competency-based training program for our covens, we have to identify exactly what are the critical skills. I'm going to propose a framework for analysis and give some examples. The examples are very subjective, entirely my own

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opinions. I would like for us to have a lot of discussion at some later time about what skills we all think are and are not critical, but just for now let's focus in on the question of whether the framework in itself is a good idea.

Let's ask ourselves five questions:

- 1) What skills is it necessary for every single coven member to have? (e.g. meditation; familiarity with Wiccan symbolic vocabulary)
- 2) What skills is it necessary for a coven leader to have? (e.g. administrative ability, conflict resolution skills)?
- 3) What skills is it necessary to have somewhere in the coven, but OK if the "specialist" is not the same person as the coven leader? (e.g. song or chant leadership)
- 4) What are the skills that would enrich the coven experience if they are available, but a perfectly satisfactory coven can exist without them? (e.g. tool making, knowledge of Welsh language ...)
- 5) What are those "class 4" (nice but not necessary) skills that are, nevertheless so much a part of your particular coven's identity or style that, in your particular case, they are really "class 1" skills?

With those questions answered, you have a basis for answering several other kinds of questions. Most obviously, with the necessary skills identified, you can then design a competency-based training program around them. After you have listed and defined the competencies you feel are needed, ask these questions: What does a person need to know or understand in order to be able to do this? What kinds of experiences in what order will help them gain competence and confidence in doing this? How do I evaluate when they are doing this adequately?

You also have a basis for decisions about initiations and elevations (First degree = competence at level one skills, third degree = competence at level two skills) and about when it is a good idea to hive (a core group exists that, among the participants, has competence at level three skills.)

What's more, looking at each individual's level four skills and interests gives you some important cues towards mentoring that person's individual development, and surely this is one of the most important aspects of what we do. [In a Tradition that includes the notion of hiving, one important job of a High Priestess is to develop more good group leaders, right?]

Another benefit of this model is that the nasty political issue of hierarchy disappears. As a High Priestess, I do not believe that I am in any way more holy or more valuable than the newest person

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in our Wicca 101 group. But I do know some things she doesn't (believe me, she also knows some wonderful level four stuff that I don't know). She says she wants to learn the things I know, and I have agreed to teach her.

Learning a skill - riding a bicycle, bread-baking, playing the piano - is easier with an experienced teacher who gives encouragement and correction. The word "craft," in plain English and without a capital "c" means exactly the same thing as skill. Having a teacher is not oppression, not hierarchy - it's just common sense.

Sharing the work is also common sense for us because we are committed to keeping our spirituality out of the marketplace. I don't believe any one person could do all the things Meredydd talks about - all of which are important - without working at it full time. But groups small enough to preserve intimacy and let each member be visible are too small to support full time clergy, so we can't have full time clergy without essentially changing the nature of our Path. One way to ease the pressure and prevent burnout is for covens to function as clergy teams - ministering both to each other within the coven and to the larger Pagan community around us.

Using a team model, the HPs no longer has to "do it all." Proteus has successfully run this way for nearly eight years now. Even better, covens can have their own specialties: performing arts, healing, mythographic scholarship [yes, Rita, you can pick only students who share your interests, and you should!] The more we spread the work, the more of us are empowered and the fewer of us risk burnout.

I've been saying for a while that I no longer believe that the Craft is a religion. Paganism is our religion, Wicca is an initiatory priesthood. By saying this, I'm not trying to warm over the old Protestant notion of "the priesthood of all believers," which tends to level and obscure individual talent, skill and dedication. Some people - perfectly good children of Mother Earth - prefer to direct their energies other ways. They may still want to come to an open Circle on the Sabbats, to celebrate and attune with the rhythms of Nature.

Our job is to make it happen, for Pagan worshippers, for each other, and for the Earth Mother. To do that job effectively, while keeping it a work of love, we must learn to honor our individual differences, recognizing that each of us contributes something different and important. Practicality demands it.

So does Pagan theology. Our religion is polytheistic. OK, let's think about practicing what we preach. I think a polymorphic priesthood, with talents and functions spread out among a group of people rather than concentrated in one pastor is actually more appropriate for us, and not just more practical.

But, if we are going to adopt the idea of a polymorphic priesthood, we have to be practical about creating institutions that support it. Here's one example: Meredydd takes us to task for

not all being trained in theology or history. I think it is very important for some of us to have that knowledge - to think through and articulate for the rest of us the implications of our myth and symbol system, and to interpret us to our coven neighbors and clear us some of the awful misconceptions about us. But I don't think we all need to have that skill. It's pretty irrelevant to the daily workings of a coven whose focus is toolmaking or healing.

Theological discourse happens to be a "specialty skill" in Meredydd's own very wonderful coven. Can we set up ways for those who have that particular skill to share it with people who have the interest, but don't know where to start? Perhaps some articles on what's happening in contemporary academic theology to fill the rest of us in?

If we are to stop expecting one person, or even one coven, to provide the full range of clergy services that other religions enjoy, while still wanting to adequately serve the Lady and Her people, then we have to get to know where the specialty skills are being nurtured and to trust and consult and refer as appropriate. That's the importance of networking: newsletters, festivals and groups like the New York Area Leaders' Support Group or CoG.

I think we can use Meredydd's challenge for something much better than turning ourselves into carbon copies of the preacher down the block. We can think specifically about the needs of our own community and culture and how we can meet those needs consistently with our own beliefs and traditions. We can do it right -- our way!

Judy Harrow

*A Comment on Will*  
by Valerie Voigt  
reprinted from Pagana #10, Beltane '82

Lately I have received many questions about right and wrong and Will. While the traditional magickal concept of Will merits an entire article of its own, I was nonetheless pleasantly surprised to come across this paragraph in *Menzed*, the journal of Mensa New Zealand. It's from an essay titled, "The Galactic Club," by Les Burgess in issue #136, edited by Alan Hopkinson, and is written from a Christian viewpoint but is easily understood in magickal terms also.

"Ideally, selfwill should be identical to divine will but this is frequently not the case (due more to ignorance than ill-will). Man, in his folly, follows his own desire rather than God's (or twists divine teaching to suit his own selfish nature). Since God is selfless and loving it follows that divine teaching is for man's benefit. It also follows that true goodness is really wisdom and evil is folly."

This is why a Witch (magician, etc.) seldom speaks of right and wrong, but usually speaks of discovering her true Will. While we may in fact use the words "right" and "wrong," it is in this context that we do so; as with so much in the practice of magic, we are using verbal shorthand.

It is essential to distinguish between WILL and WISH. The difference is very important, and may perhaps best be communicated by examples:

As I am typing here, it is my WISH (or DESIRE) to be, instead, at home eating cookies and making romance. It is my WILL, however, to be here, producing *Pagana*.

A soldier at war may WISH to be home with his family, but he WILLS that he protect them by fighting instead (at least if he was a volunteer).

The captain of the Rainbow Warrior II may WISH he might be working a pleasant, comfortable, safe job that pays well — yet it is his WILL that he brave cold, physical danger, and other hardships in order to protect endangered whales.

It is in this light that Aleister Crowley wrote, "Love is the Law, Love under Will." And, to those he considered more magickally advanced, he wrote, "Do as thou Wilt is the whole of the Law" — because the mention of Love was REDUNDANT. Love is intrinsic in True Will.

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A few comments from Ashta'arArthura, to add to the ongoing discussions:

There does seem to be overwhelming evidence that psi abilities peak around puberty. I'm sure it has something to do with repressing the sex drive. There we are, suddenly overcome by the unfamiliar, scary/exciting, imperative urge to fuck--but Society expects us to suppress it in favor of more constructive activities (like passing geometry). All that energy has to go somewhere, and in some of us it goes into psi phenomena. Repressed sexuality has a long history of association with mystical and magickal performance. Think of the persistent superstitions that insist that a magickal practitioner be a virgin, or at least celibate, and that a sexual experience will destroy the magick-user's power. And, on the other hand, think of the channeling of sexual energy in Tantra and other forms of sex magick.

I think it has to do with hormone levels. In my own experience, I was a fairly powerful telepath, with some precog as well, into my late adolescence. When I became sexually active, my first contraceptive was the Pill, which is, of course, a combination of various sex hormones. After a while, I found I had lost not only my psi talents, but also the ability to have an orgasm. When I switched to a barrier-type contraceptive method, my orgasmic capacity came back, as did some of my psychic ability (I never did get it all back).

I also recognize that a lot of my mystical/religious/psychic experiences have always had very obvious sexual undertones. I find it very easy to transmute unconsummated lust (there's that ole repression again) into mystical ecstasy and trance states.

Except for the side-effects of the Pill, I don't think I had/have any metabolic or biochemical abnormalities. The reasons I was considered "weird" as a child were my high IQ, my interest in science and technology, and my habit of reading science fiction, none of which were acceptable for a girl. But my psi talents (or what's left of them) seem to wax and wane according to some patternless whim. They don't correlate with my blood sugar, my menstrual cycle, my sleep patterns, or even my overall health. They seem to be more influenced by who I've been hanging out with, what I've been reading, and (to a lesser extent) by my physical surroundings.

Not that biochemical factors don't have some influence on psychic abilities. There are certain controlled substances that seem to enhance various psi talents (although some people tell me the apparent enhancement is an illusion), as well as certain substances that deaden the talent.

As for "safe" ritual food and drink, there are some insurmountable problems with food allergies and avoidances. Just among the members of Proteus, we have vegetarians, and people who don't eat, variously, beef, pork, dairy, onions, wheat, spicy or greasy foods, and seafood. I suspect that the most nearly non-allergenic food you're gonna get is those plain, low-sodium rice cakes (the round ones that taste like Puffed Rice).

Drinks present similar problems. If you don't serve alcohol, then it's some sort of fruit juice, and there'll be somebody who's allergic to that kind of fruit. And I'm really getting to hate apple juice. Even water may weird out some people. I guess as long as it's Natural Spring Water, direct from the Goddess' ever-flowing breast (that means no tap water), it's religiously pure enough. (Hey, wait, who said Witches were supposed to keep kosher?)

Sharing a beverage without sharing germs is a little easier to manage. (What if someone puts her/his mouth on the pipette, Rowen?) You need a large punchbowl or cauldron, and a ladle. Each participant is asked in advance to bring a cup; I guess for really large gatherings you're stuck with disposable

(biodegradable!) cups of some sort. There are a couple of ways to consecrate the whole vatful.

The priestess and priest (or whoever) can dip out their cupful and consecrate it in the usual way, athame-into-cup, then pour most of it back into the cauldron before they drink from the cup. Or you could take your nice big dramatic sword, and plunge it into the cauldron. Either way, the assembled multitude then gets their cups filled, one at a time, with ladlefuls of drink.

Incidentally, this can also be used to strengthen the group bonding of a smallish group. Instead of one or two individuals blessing the potful of liquid, each person in turn sticks her/his (clean) athame into the drink, with some appropriate and personally meaningful bit of ritual. Then when everyone takes a drink, everyone is sharing everyone else's blessings.

If the "Federation Space Academy" wasn't an All-Fools' joke, I'd like a whole lot more information about/from them.

I think the semi-official definition of a "cult" is "any religious or mystical group I don't understand or approve of". It does, however, appear that organized religion has perpetrated most of the really awful atrocities of recorded history. That's why I prefer disorganized religion.

And for the various skin afflictions, what about just spreading the affected area with the goop from aloe leaves, and letting it dry?



Ashta'arArthura

*Engineering as a Spiritual Activity: THE EXISTENTIAL PLEASURES OF ENGINEERING*

Author: Samuel Florman \$3.95

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ISBN # 0-312-27546-3

Review by Valerie Voigt

reprinted from *Pagana* #26, Mabon '85

There are some topics which most polite people avoid discussing. These topics, however offensive they may be to some people, nonetheless do bear consideration among consenting adults. To write of this one, Samuel Florman has swallowed his shyness in a bold, and potentially liberating, step.

We all know that engineering is unnatural, and that its practitioners are flawed in character: after all, each of us has seen for ourself that engineers suffer from an inability to face the real world. Unable to deal with adult passion, emotion, and spirit, the engineer is generally stuck in the first two elements. Earth and Air? Sure, an engineer can handle those. But Fire, Water, and Aither are beyond the grasp of such a person, who is forever stuck in this infantile stage of development. Some theoreticians agree with Father Perturbatio's hypothesis that the engineer is acting out the rejection of a cold or absent sister and a clinging, smothering brother; others disagree, noting that this hypothesis does not explain the engineering which sometimes occurs in children of normal, happy, elementally-balanced homes.

It is a myth that engineers always look 'that way.' Contrary to common belief, many engineers wear pants of normal length and matching socks. Some even omit the pockets of multiple colored pens, though of course many carry them as a cruising signal: after all, engineers have trouble forming normal relationships, and prefer to seek their own kind. One way to tell a 'closet' engineer is by the nervous habit of reaching for the breast pocket when faced with a question; this is the well-known 'calculator-grab' reflex, commonest in long-time practitioners of the vice.

We all know that there are engineers in our midst: up to 10% of the population, by some estimates (of course, this percentage is higher in the cities they have 'taken over,' such as Santa Clara with its notorious Kiely Boulevard district). Most of us, however, are able to look the other way. Now, don't get me wrong --- some of my best friends are engineers. But would you want your brother to marry one?

This book, written by a self-confessed engineer, is aimed both at engineers and at normal people --- and also at those individuals who feel occasional disturbing urges, who may feel slightly nerdy, and may suspect themselves of having engineer leanings.

This may come as a shock: but, Florman asserts, engineering is as natural as any other form of human expression. It is fashionable to say that engineering is a modern vice, created by the artificial constraints of modern civilization; he retorts, "Not so!" On the contrary, he insists, engineering has a long and honorable history. The Pyramids stand in mute testimony to the existence --- nay, even the open acceptance --- of engineers in ancient society. But why have there been no great engineer artists? In response to this oft-asked question, Florman quotes from the fundamental works of modern civilization: the Old Testament and Homer. He adds (p. 102) that one of the origins of prejudice against engineering is the New Testament.

There is beauty in engineering, he continues. Too long have engineers accepted society's negative stereotypes of them; the insidiousness of it is that by this acceptance the stereotypes have begun to come true, and therefore self-perpetuating. It is therefore impossible to determine the engineer's true identity. Florman admits that the stereotypes are all too accurate in many cases: engineers do indeed tend to be "practical, analytical, and nonemotional" (p. 91) as seen in the popular "Kiely clone" image (termed by some researchers the "Silicon Valley Guy" or SVG).

Then Florman hits home on one of our hidden fears: citing good evidence, he writes, "To be human is to be technological" (p. 58). There. It is said. This means that everyone has the potential for engineering behavior --- a possibility which may frighten the cowardly into a hostile response. This is not a cause for shame, the author continues: engineers are proud of what they are and what they do. He quotes MacKnight Black, author of *MACHINERY*:

The arc of a blance-wheel

Flows like a curved rush of swallows, come over a hill....

Look long on an engine. It is sweet to the eyes.

Florman cites Biblical references to support his arguments. They are good references, if somewhat dated. Unfortunately he cites no astrological evidence, but perhaps such research has yet to be done.

He points out, however, that an autopsy of the past is not really what is needed: "The time has come for us to end with defending ourselves against spurious criticism and to start in search of an engineering philosophy for our age." (p. 98.)

Seriously: In this book, Florman explores the relationship between humanity and technology. He lucidly discusses the anti-technology movement, the prevalent stereotypes of engineers, and the history of literature related to engineering. He does, indeed, discuss all of the issues listed in the paragraphs above. In the end, he enters the realm of the spirit, writing,

Somewhere among the states of being sought by wise men...the engineer becomes absorbed with the machine (p. 137).... When we speak of sensing life in the machine...we can think only in terms of the basic energy of the universe, which physicists (and philosophers) have told us is also matter --- one pulsing essence which is manifest everywhere. We encounter 'it' in forests, of course, and in clouds, and within ourselves. But as engineers, we also encounter 'it' repeatedly in the machines we design and manufacture and use (pp. 139-140).

He quotes Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*:

The Buddha, the Godhead, resides quite as comfortably in the circuits of a digital computer or the gears of a cycle transmission as he does at the top of a mountain or in the petals of a flower. To think otherwise is to demean the Buddha --- which is to demean oneself.

The entirety of Chapter 11 is devoted to engineering's potential as a spiritually fulfilling path. If matter and spirit are one, if the Universe is a great living entity, he tells us, engineers can experience their own divinity by opening up to an awareness of their participation in this huge dance of life. They must raise their own consciousnesses. "The engineer who will not open...up..., who will not feel..., may very well end up as the inauthentic, smoothed-down man that the anti-technologists accuse him of being" (p. 150).

A good book, and a refreshing one.

PROTEAN SYNTHESIS # 5

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A Protean Family Newsletter  
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FROM THE EDITOR

This is the special ish I hinted at. The next issue is still the Beltane '88 ish and the deadline will be just before the middle of April. As usual, I might change my furry little mind.

LETTER TO PS

Dear Protean Synthesis,

Kestrel and I (Yona Whitethorn) have been reading the PROTEAN SYNTHESIS with much interest. We're sorry we've been so "out of touch" with our Protean forebears, but we have kept ourselves busy.

Right now (since about last June) we have been working with a traditional Gardnerian coven in Los Angeles and developing a solid foundation in traditional Craft. We have also met informally and intermittently with a group of women from various traditions to discuss "spirituality" in all its facets and anticipate the formation of a more formalized grouping in the Riverside of San Bernadino are soon.

Bright Blessings!-- Yona Whitethorn, Kestrel.

TO THE GODDESS

O My Mother - Light Crowned:  
You are the Ewe full of milk,  
You are the Fruit full of seed,  
You are the Fountain and Womb,  
You are the darkly petalled Flower  
that brings forth Creation.  
O Mother - Light Crowned,  
Speak through your servant and  
priestess

--- Yona Whitethorn

ANATH RESEMBLES KALI  
by Rita Prince Winston

At the California Museum of Ancient Art - Peppardine University Master Class on Sumerian culture in May 1987, Dr. William Fulco, a Semiticist, gave a lecture about the Northwest Semitic goddesses. The Northwest Semitic language group contains the Canaanites ("Hebrew is a Canaanite dialect") and the Phoenicians. The Phoenicians are the Canaanites left over after the Israelite conquest. "Canaan" comes from a Semitic word meaning "dark red" and "Phoenicia" comes from a Greek word meaning "dark red". The Phoenicians invented the alphabet -- all the alphabets in this world, even Sanskrit, are descended from the Phoenician alphabet -- and they colonized the known world. Meanwhile, the East Semitic language group contains Akkadian and Babylonian from Mesopotamia, and the South Semitic language group contains Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic.

The three main goddesses of the Northwest Semites were Athirat, Ashtart, and Anath. Athirat, whom we call Ashera, was the consort of El. The word "El" means "god". El's title was "the ancient of days" and he was the creator god. Athirat was a goddess of impersonal fertility, sort of a Mother Nature. Her name means "one who treads", originally a treader on the steppes, but later Athirat Yam, the treader on the sea.

Ashtart, whom we call Astarte, was a goddess of more personal lust and love. She was the consort of Eshmun, a very popular god about whom I know nothing except that the Greeks identified him with Asklepios, god of healing. One of

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my books reports that Astarte and Eshmun took the starring roles in the Phoenician version of the old story elsewhere starring Inanna and Damuzi, Ishtar and Tammuz, Isis and Osiris, Aphrodite and Adonis.

Anath is a bloodthirsty warrior goddess. She is the consort of Baal. The word "Baal" means "master", and his titles include "the rider on the clouds" and "the young bull". He is a storm god, portrayed as a fierce warrior. Some people think that Anath was the origin of Athena, but I doubt it. Anath's insane bloodlust doesn't seem to me to have much to do with Athena's cool strategy, and both the Minoans and the Hellenes already had each their young warrior goddess, and the very name Athena has been found in Minoan writing.

However, as different cultural groups learned about these goddesses from each other, their characteristics tended to blend together. Athirat became the fish-tailed goddess Atargatis, whose name sounds like that of "foam born" Aphrodite, except that the Greeks identified Atargatis with Hera as Queen of Heaven. The worship of Aphrodite, well known to have begun at Cyprus (the myth says she waded ashore there, which is why cypresses and copper are sacred to her), is thought to have originated because the Phoenicians colonists on Cyprus built a large temple to Astarte and Eshmun. The Greeks mistook Astarte's name for that of one of their minor moon goddesses, Aphrodite, and they mistook Eshmun's title Adonai ("lord") for the name Adonis.

Last summer, the CMAA presented a lecture by Dr. William Dever on "Israelite Popular Religion during the Divided Monarchy". The archaeological evidence (such as excavated "high places", inscriptions, and statuettes) reveals that there was a great deal less monotheism in ancient Israel than the Bible would have you believe. At the beginning of the divided monarchy (Israel and Judah) period, the Israelites worshipped the normal Canaanite gods, each with his consort beside him. Inscriptions mention El and Athirat or Baal and Anath or Eshmun and Ashtart. Another god was Resef, whose statuettes show him looking like an Egyptian warrior. One book says he was the god of the underworld, another book says he was the god of death and disease, and yet another book says he was "the god of light and life, a Canaanite Apollo"! I don't know why the books are sure that Resef was a different god than Baal.

The Yahwists gained ground. By the end of the period, the inscriptions asked the blessings of "Yahwah and his Ashera". Yahwah had displaced all the male gods, and all the goddesses had been combined into Ashera. Images showed Yahwah as an empty throne (the taboo against graven images) and Ashera as a naked woman standing on the back of a lion or between two lions. Previously, the lions had belonged to Anath, as later they were associated with Cybele.

However, the Egyptian cow goddess Hathor had meanwhile become very popular throughout the Near East, and eventually filled the place vacated by the Canaanite goddesses. Egyptian influence in the Near East is no surprise. As early as the Sumerian cities of Ebla and Mari, we find artifacts from Sixth Dynasty Egypt. Later, the Egyptians also had military campaigns in the Near East, sometimes conquering well into Palestine. Not to mention the Semites in Egypt as slave-shepherds, mercenaries, or Hyksos kings. One example of Levantine influence in Egypt is a text of the Isis-Osiris story which provides a happy ending for everybody by giving Anath and Ashtart to Set as wives as compensation for losing the kingship.

Dr. Fulco pointed out that, while it is customary to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of the Northwest Semitic goddesses by analogy with earlier East Semitic and later Greek goddesses, we should remember that the only route between the East Semites and the West Semites was a long caravan route through the city of Ugarit. Ugarit was in contact with (sometimes conquered by) Hurrians, Mitanni, and Hittites, as well as Egyptians, and the Hurrians, Mitanni, and Hittites were in some sort of contact with India.



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West:

Hail, Guardians of the Watchtowers of the West,  
Powers of Water!  
Epona, goddess of rivers and lakes,  
Llyr, Sea-god and father of gods,  
Be with us tonight and ward our rites.  
Hail and Welcome!

North:

Hail, Guardians of the Watchtowers of the North,  
Powers of Earth!  
Adraste, goddess of the hunt,  
Cernunnos, of the seven-tined horns,  
Be with us tonight and ward our rites.  
Hail and Welcome!

PROTEAN SYNTHESIS: WHAT IS A COVEN?  
Rita Prince Winston

[Like almost all of my articles in PS, this is a reprint from PALLAS SOCIETY NEWS. This is from Beltane '88 PSN. Every issue of PSN has a section called Readers' Forum. The Readers' Forum topic for the Beltane '88 is "What is a Coven?" and this article is my contribution to that discussion. Since PS is a Protean family zine, it's appropriate for me to mention that this is a very personal article. The coven I mention that succeeded beautifully was Proteus Coven and the coven that failed miserably was Thalassa kai Oros and the High Priestess who failed miserably was me. I had some trouble writing the article: there are some subjects that I rushed through very fast, trampling on ideas as I rush. I hope some of you will send PS articles or letters or something about some of the ideas and subjects that I didn't do justice to.]

I decided to borrow the Readers' Forum topic.

Dictionary definitions first. A coven is a small group (traditionally, covens have three to thirteen members) of Witches who meet regularly to practise Witchcraft together (and I define Witchcraft as one religion which worships the Pagan gods). Such groups can also be named groves, circles, fellowships, sisterhoods, brotherhoods, churches, etc.

Different traditions (denominations) of Wicca have their regulations about coven membership. Often, only initiates are considered coven members, so the ritual of initiation marks the initiate's birth or adoption as a coven member, as well as a catalysis of spiritual development, and acknowledgement of the initiate's role as priest/ess.

But the dictionary definition is too cold and dry for the strong feelings I have about covening. There is a slogan: "coven is chosen family", which partially expresses how I feel. I am used to a world in which twos and threes of coveners socially hang out in each other's apartments, go shopping or to the movies or to museums together, eat Thanksgiving and Xmas dinner together (which is comforting for coveners who live 3000 miles away from their birth families), and just generally are close friends. If the purpose of ritual nudity (called "skyclad") is to symbolize trust, what's the point of working skyclad with a bunch of strangers?

In my trad, "perfect love and perfect trust" is the ideal which all relationships in the coven try to reach. The result is that the main word I use to describe covening is "intimacy".

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Trusting, we relax our shields and become emotionally vulnerable. At the same time, trusting, we relax our "company manners" and behave casually, even obnoxiously, to each other. The enclosed/delimited womb/hothouse nature of the Circle generalizes to the coven, and this pressure cooker is fueled by the psychic energy raised in ritual and flooded with the strong feelings experienced in ritual. It gets intense.

One result is that coveners fall in love. Another result, sometimes related, is that coveners fight with each other. One family-like aspect of covens is that passionate screaming matches can develop over almost anything. One covener gets very tired of waiting for another who is chronically an hour late. One covener is bothered by using the words "man" and "he" for generic humanity; another is convinced that the words "humanity" and "they" are ungrammatical.

A particularly family-like aspect of fights between coveners is that the "chosen family" of coven isn't really all that chosen. In order to join a coven which is geographically convenient or has a wonderful High Priestess or of which one's lover is already a member, one makes a commitment to an already existing group of people whom one may not know very well. Some of them may be people, wonderful in themselves, who have a characteristic or two that really gets on one's nerves, but the applicant for membership can't choose to join "Soandso Coven minus John Doe".

Covens can break up from this fighting, or one covener can drop out. Or coveners can communicate their positions, listen and understand each other's feelings, forgive and comfort each other, and thus the coven becomes stronger and more intimate than before.

What is a coven? Intimacy. Trust. Love. But not taking it for granted that you'll live happily ever after without working at it.

Having all agreed on the noble generalization that we will work to achieve and maintain a good relationship in our marriages, I mean covens, the next question is: What will we do? What specific kind of work is effective?

That's a question that I really want to know the answer to, so I've read a couple of books on relationships and a couple of Pagan zine articles on covens. The books and articles basically all say that you communication, trust, and intimacy. I agree, I need communication, trust, and intimacy, but to me those are the goals. I was hoping that the books and articles would tell me HOW to communicate, trust and be trusted, and be intimate.

I know one specific technique, which I saw work beautifully in one coven and fail miserably in another. This technique is called Open Forum or Gripe Session. Periodically (every three months was suggested), the coven has a meeting for members only. Clothes are kept on, no altar is set up, no Circle is cast. Every one who has a problem with another member of the coven or with the coven in general tells their problem. There can be replies and discussions. Sometimes solutions are actually found, as when a person who didn't like the style of the coven rituals was assigned to officiate the ritual for the next upcoming Sabbat. Sometimes problems are not solved, but cease to be problems when there is more information. An example is one time when I felt bad because I thought that a particular man in the coven was snubbing me. When I mentioned this at the Open Forum, it turned out that basically everyone except the High Priestess and this man's girlfriend felt the same way. I felt a lot better when I realised that it was nothing personal, it was just his style not to talk to people.

Sometimes problems don't get any better after being discussed, but people feel better about them. The High Priestess of the coven where Open Forums worked often said that the Open Forum isn't intended to solve problems, just to bring them out in the open, because it's better for people to air their grievances instead of keeping them inside festering. There was one woman I always used to argue with all the time. When we had a long discussion about the stuff we disagreed about, we didn't agree, but we each felt that the other was honest and well-meaning.

Even in that coven, Open Forums didn't always work. Sometimes issues were raised that turned into shouting matches. Shouting matches in themselves are not such a bad thing: it is the issues that people feel strongly about that most need to be discussed. If the people listen to each other in between shouting, the issues can be resolved the same as in a more polite discussion. One problem is that when people get angry, sometimes they say things which hurt the other person's feelings worse than they were hurt before. What has in my experience been a worse problem is that when people get angry, often they don't listen. One very explicit example is one Open Forum where one woman got so angry, she wasn't just screaming, she was beating up the sofa pillows, and she kept shouting: "Don't talk to me when I'm angry!" This is a lot more honest than people who scream: "I am so listening, you idiot!", but in both cases issues have been raised that can't be discussed, which leaves me with a very frustrating and painful feeling of incompleteness.

That kind of anger, and that kind of frustration, can lead people to drop out of the coven, and their lovers with them, which might not be such a bad thing. It's less painful to attend meetings of a smaller coven all friendly than meetings of a larger coven which is always having big emotional scenes. On the other hand, you lose diversity when people drop out.

When I get down to reasons why the Open Forum worked in that coven and didn't work in the other coven (which eventually disintegrated), it all seems to boil down to the High Priestess. People in the first coven trusted their coveners enough to tell their problems at the Open Forum. People in the second coven very often felt that telling their problems was at best a waste of time which would do no good, and that it would very likely lead to getting bitched at. It's up to the High Priestess, as facilitator of the Open Forum, to establish a "safe space" where people will be willing to talk. (I don't know how nonhierarchical collectives do it.)

One aspect of creating a safe space is that everyone will get a chance to speak their piece, while unnecessary personal attacks will be minimized. There are many techniques of giving everyone a chance to speak, from Robert's Rules of Order to talking sticks to sheer personal charisma. The problem is that to make effective use of any technique, the High Priestess must maintain a certain emotional detachment. That means she can't feel attacked or threatened when coveners tell their problems against her, and she can't use the Forum to tell her problems against coveners. Unless she has some other way of dealing with her problems, she will start feeling not at all trusting or intimate, which makes it difficult for her to create trust and intimacy. As for other ways of dealing with her problems, she can get the advantages of airing them out by talking them over with a supportive working partner, if she is lucky enough to have one. There is a discussion in *THE WITCH'S WAY* by the Farrars of how important it is for a (Gardnerian style) High Priest to support and protect the High Priestess. A problem here is that the priestess who is the best ritualist, or the most knowledgeable occultist, may not be the best facilitator and the partner who is the best ritualist, or the High Priestess's spouse, may not be the best nurturer.

Another aspect of establishing a safe space is that some people are vortices of disruption. First I will discuss a behavior which is more disruptive to the general functioning of the coven than to the Open Forum in particular. Some people are very unreliable, about punctuality and attendance and paying back money they've borrowed and preparing rituals that they've promised to prepare and bringing food or supplies they've promised to bring. Everyone can be unreliable once in a while -- people do get sick and cars do break down -- but some people are more unreliable than others, and some are even more unreliable than that. It's up to each coven to decide how much unreliability it's willing to work around. The problem is that the way a person is discovered to be unreliable is usually that people rely on him/her and he/she fails them, which usually leaves them feeling cheated and angry and in no mood to establish procedures for working around the unreliability problem.

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Another problem which is disruptive both to the general functioning of the coven and to the Open Forum is people who all the time make remarks that hit other coveners on personal sore spots. A perfect person would assume that the verbal attack was an accident, or at least think "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me". Unfortunately, many human beings are not perfect (which is why we need Open Forums or some other problem resolution methods in the first place) and feel hurt and confused by remarks which feel like personal attacks on emotional sore spots. I can't say for sure if the unhelpful remarks are the result of simple malice, of a misguided sense of humor, or of sheer unfortunate coincidence. I can tell you that, in my experience, all the people I've met who fall into this category have been self-proclaimed Discordians, and most of them have taken the Craft names "Eris" or "Loki".

Their behavior is absolutely true to their chosen names. Eris's fame is that she ruined a party on Olympus (by tossing in a golden apple labelled: "For the most beautiful", so all the goddesses fought over which one it belonged to). One of Loki's pranks was to crash a party on Asgard, where he taunted each god and goddesses with past shames. The Trickster archetype IS disruption. People who think the Trickster is comfortable should try being rescue volunteers in towns devastated by tornadoes or earthquakes.

Another problem, or maybe it's the same one, is that some people have very thick psychological barriers against intimacy. They can talk a good game, but deep down they never trust anyone enough to tell them what they really feel. And then there are people who always throw noisy temper tantrums when criticised, or even given constructive advice.

There is an issue, there is always an issue, in the conscience of each covener: how much of my problem with so-and-so is because of the way so-and-so behaves, and how much is just projection on my part, or my attempt to force other people's diversity into my own mold? There is an issue, there is always an issue, in the conscience of each covener: should we protect ourselves by ditching this disruptive person, or would it be unbearably selfish to abandon a person who so clearly has problems and needs help?

All these people do have problems (assuming it isn't JUST projection). Unreliability is a problem in itself or related to craziness or a result of an overstressed lifestyle, or sometimes related to drug/alcohol abuse. Nasty remarks can indicate a severe lack of social communication skills or a hostile attitude (itself a psychological problem). Fear of intimacy and fear of criticism are also psychological problems.

It is up to the High Priestess to free the consciences of the other coveners by making that decision.

Some High Priestesses are very good at making that decision and also at politely but firmly telling people that they have to go now. Some High Priestesses can make the decision, but tell the person to leave in a way that leads to a big fight and a scandal in the Pagan community. Some High Priestesses expel people too lightly, thus earning a reputation for being arbitrary and tyrannical. Some High Priestesses fail to expel people who stay and make the coven so unpleasant for everyone that all the other coveners drop out.

There is some ethical debate about whether people who have problems and don't want help should be helped. There is some practical debate about HOW people who have problems and do want help should be helped. If a covener, a Witch, or any Pagan, needs help and wants help with a problem (including any of the problems I listed a couple of paragraphs ago), giving that help is the responsibility of the High Priestess.

This leads to the topic of Pastoral Counselling, a topic which is fine for High Priestesses who happen to be trained social workers or psychotherapists, but not so fine for High Priestesses who happen to be engineers or computer programmers whose home covens trained them in ritual and theology, but not in counselling.

Book Review: The Folk of the Air, Peter S. Beagle (Ballantine, 1986, \$4.50)

There are several very good reasons to read this book, even though it has no direct relation to the Craft. The first reason is the writing. Beagle is one of the most talented fantasy writers alive; his use of language is dazzling and marvelous. The imagery he evokes can have you laughing so hard your stomach hurts, and in the same sentence take your breath away with a sudden insight. This is the man who wrote "Lila the Werewolf" and The Last Unicorn and "Come Lady Death"; he isn't especially prolific, but when he does write, you realize it was worth the wait.

Another reason to read this book is the fact that it's a deliciously nasty send-up of the Society for Creative Anachronism, lightly disguised as the "League for Archaic Pleasures". The dead-serious role-playing, the silliness of grownups talking like a Prince Valiant comic strip, the costumes, the warfare, the internal petty politicking---there's enough overlap among Craft, fandom, and SCA, that you'll recognize some of your acquaintances here. It's hilarious, and mostly true.

Then there are the characters. The protagonist is Joe Farrell, the ex-boyfriend of Lila (the werewolf); he plays the lute and drives an old VW bus which has more personality than most TV anchorpersons. There's Aiffe, a fifteen-year-old sorceress with no morals to speak of, and more power than she ought to have. And Farrell's sometime girlfriend, Julie Tanakawa, and her motorcycle. And then there's Sia. A sixtyish, overweight, house-bound woman in a chenille bathrobe and bunny slippers, who happens to be the Goddess. (Sia is short for Athanasia, and my Greek is good enough to translate that as "immortal".) The supporting cast includes Prester John, a misplaced Viking, Saint Whale, a bus driver named Lovita Bird, a neurotic dog, assorted street weirdos, and a cameo appearance by the goddess Kannon.

To be fair, Beagle does refer to the Craft directly--describing some SCA (excuse me, "League") practitioners of Wicca, the Old Religion, he says one of them "makes witchcraft sound like organic mulching." The dangerously talented Aiffe is constantly referred to as a witch, but of her Beagle says, "What you guys have there is no cultural-anthropology drop-out planting string beans naked in the full moon. What you have there is Baba Yaga."

Aiffe uses some dangerous and nasty magick for purely personal ends, and has the nerve to go up against Sia (guess who wins). There is transmigration of personalities backward and forward through time; possession, though not demonic; music, poetry, dancing, sex, and love; and an ending that cries out for a sequel.

I strongly recommend that you read this book, just for fun or for deeper reasons. It came out in hardcover about a year before the paperback edition, so check your library if you can't afford to buy the paperback. Just don't read it in public, unless you don't mind being stared at as you giggle, gasp, and weep at the many twists of the story.

Ashta'arArthura

## INCORPORATING THE ELEMENTS IN MAGICAL WORK: A RITUAL OF WATER

by Rita Prince Winston

Many people in the Craft have a favorite element, or maybe two. My favorite element is Water, in the aspect of Ocean (I also like hot baths). My coveners smile knowingly and say: "You're a Scorpio, and that's a Water sign". This is true. I know a Gemini whose favorite element is Air, a Pisces whose favorite element is Water, and a Leo and Sagittarius whose favorite element is Fire. But I also know a Pisces and a Leo whose favorite element is Earth and a Libra whose favorite element is Fire. If you're one of those people and your coveners give you a hard time about it, tell them you'd rather follow your heart than your chart.

People whose favorite element is Fire tend to be appointed Coven Pyromaniac and always asked to light the candles and incense when the group sets up for Circle. One way to share coven expenses would be to ask the Fire folks to bring the candles as well as light them, the Air people to bring the incense, the Water people to bring the wine or juice, and the Earth people to bring the bread or cookies. In consecrating the elements for Circle casting, each element symbol (salt, water, incense, candle) can be consecrated by the person who brought it.

I am fond of the custom that people sit near the Watchtower of their favorite element. I sit in the West. Traditionally, Air is East, Fire is South, Water is West, and Earth is North. Some people say that on the East Coast, Air is West and Water is East, and in the Southern Hemisphere, Fire is North and Earth is South.

Groups who work robed can decide to wear robes of the colors of their favorite elements. (People wearing robes of their favorite color is similar, but usually with a lot more purple.) In general, shades of blue and green seem Watery, green and brown seem Earthy, red and yellow seem Fiery, and yellow and blue seem Airy. The Watchtowers can have color co-ordinated candles, candle holders, flowers, banners, as well as other decorations like sea shells at West, pine cones, Indian corn, antlers and crystals at North, a mobile of yellow origami birds and butterflies at East, and tigers and shiny brass at South. Elaborate and beautiful Watchtower Invocations may be used, and each Watchtower may be invoked by a different person (whether chosen in advance or whoever happens to stand nearest that Watchtower).

In addition to enjoying an affectionate relationship with his/her favorite element, a Witch should establish a relationship with each of the elements in order to be psychologically well-rounded. Two parts of casting the Circle (consecrating the elements and invoking the Watchtowers) symbolize integrating all four elements into a mandala. The psychologist, Jung, used the quartered circle mandala to represent integration of four functions: thinking (Air), feeling (Water), inspiration (Fire -- he called this "intuition"), and bodily sensation (Earth).

One way a coven can help its members integrate all four elements is to devote an evening's ritual to the four elements. Taking each element in turn, coveners can offer poetry, music, dance, pictures and statues about that element, then do a guided meditation (perhaps with appropriate instrumental music as background) to visit that element. Fly in the air like a bird and feel the air in your breath. Dance in the fire like a spark and feel the energy sparkling along your nervous system. Swim in the water like a fish and feel the tides in your veins. Root in the earth like a tree and feel the strength of your flesh. There are guided meditations for each element in THE SPIRAL DANCE, and the word association chant in that book is good for after each trance working. There is also some good material about the elements in MOTHERWIT by Diane Mariechild.

Or a coven can devote one entire evening to each element. I once invited my coveners to a Circle to honor all Sea Gods and Goddesses. The Watchtowers I invited were the sea breeze, the sunlight sparkling on the waves, the waves themselves, and the salt and sand in the water. I had images of Yemaya and a Yemaya Seven Herb bath from the local botanica, and we all washed each other's hands in the bath (the main ingredient is rosemary), after doing a brief guided meditation of visiting the beach. Each person in turn offered a poem, song, chant, or story in honor of his/her favorite Sea god/dess. We ended by singing Charlie Murphy's song, "Oh, Mother Ocean."

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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Dear Rita and Protean Synthesis,

I just finished eagerly reading the two articles by Meredydd and Judy Harrow in Protean Synthesis #4 recently, and in reading them I found that I had a number of rather jumbled reactions to the articles as ideas and questions sprang to mind faster than I could sort them out. I will try to be coherent as I sift through all of these personal reactions for you all.

First, by way of introduction, my name is Yona Whitethorn and I have been initiated both as a first degree "Protean" (Proteid?) and as a first degree Gardnerian (in a different coven). I was also ordained in 1978 as a clergyperson in a major Christian denomination and still hold orders in that denomination today. [Obviously, the Bishop does not know about my involvement with Wicca, nor would he be at all pleased!] My Christian ordination was preceded by three years of seminary at the end of which I was granted a Master of Divinity degree. Much as Meredydd stated it, my seminary coursework included study of the scriptures, church history, Greek and Hebrew, counseling, preaching, theology, social ethics, church administration, and denominational polity. (I've probably forgotten some things, but that's the gist of it).

As you can see from my personal introduction, I am one of only a few modern individuals who can look at the comparison between witches and Christian ministers as members of the clergy from the "inside", since I have been both.

It seems to me that in trying to compare the ministries of a Christian pastor and a Wiccan priest or priestess we are trying to compare positions that cannot truly be compared. And furthermore, I do not believe that it is particularly desirable to compare them.

Many of us in Wicca left the Christian church because intuitively, we had a difficult time dealing with the separation between clergy and congregation in the normal church structure. This separation exists whether the clergyperson has been professionally trained, or simply "called by the Holy Spirit" as is the tradition in some more conservative groups. The point is, that in that kind of congregational set-up, it is the clergyperson that has been given the "inside track" to the holy and it is generally expected that any revelation or wisdom will be imparted to

the congregation from "God" to the people through him or her only. It is never explicitly stated, but the assumption is that the congregation will remain rather passive in the whole process and receive whatever spiritual gift is given, but will not participate much in bringing it to pass, or act in a prophetic way to change the oppressive structures either of society or the church. Furthermore, there are no particular entrance requirements for being a member of the congregation in a church, so there is usually a rather low level of commitment to the role of congregant.

In contrast to this picture, the role of being a covener is anything but passive. Judy alluded to the fact that when a person is initiated into the craft it is assumed that eventually that person will be able to function in a "priestly" role within the coven. The coven cannot function properly without the wholehearted participation and involvement of every covener under the leadership of the high priestess and high priest. Everyone helps raise power, everyone is involved in the pathworkings, everyone shares in the burdens and the joys together, and the welfare of the coven is the responsibility of all of its members.

What about the question of whether a Wiccan priest or priestess should be considered a member of the clergy? I contend that it is not for the Christian church or any other outside body to pass judgement about whether we in Wicca are clergy. The question more properly needs to be addressed to ourselves. Are we actually functioning as clergy for ourselves? Does each and every member of any of our covens pull his or her own weight? If a person is needed to function as HP or HPS on short notice, is there anyone to volunteer, or does the HPS have to spend half of her life on the telephone trying to rustle somebody up to fill the job? If there is a member of the coven that is hurting in a personal way, is there somebody (and is that "somebody" not always the same person) that can do some good listening and perhaps some informal peer counseling with that person? Does it take forever to get anything important done, or do people pull together in a pinch? Do we act ethically and honorably toward others? Are we ever party to negative magic, gossip, back-biting or harassment? Are we mature enough to fulfill a leadership role or a supporting role with equal ease depending on where we are needed, or do we feel the need to "grandstand" or sabotage other's efforts? If we can answer the questions that I have posed for us in a positive way, then I believe that we indeed ARE clergy in our own mold and by our own standards. It does not take three years of seminary training to use our brains and our hearts and our gifts for the good of our own coven and the craft as a whole. We are clergy if we claim the power to be so.

Bright Blessings,

*Yona* ▽

Yona Whitethorn

## 3 ECLECTIC VS. TRADITIONAL WICCA : A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

First, a bit of introduction. My Craft name is Kestral, I am a First Degree Gardnerian initiate, a former member of the Protean coven Thalassa Kai Oros, and have been active in the Craft for about 2 years.

Now some personal history. I was first introduced to the idea of the Craft many years ago by some SCA friends before I was ready to listen. (She knows these things.) I became reacquainted with the idea some three years ago while reading Katherine Kurtz' Lammas Night and Marion Zimmer Bradley's Mists of Avalon. "Aha !" I thought, "This is what I've been searching for!" (A common experience for Wiccans) I looked around a bit for like-minded folk, calling on my SCA friends for references, and did a great deal of reading (Starhawk, Adler, Gardner, Farrar etc). I was not having much luck finding people I was interested in working with until I met Yona, who was attending Dancejoy's Protean coven, Thalassa Kai Oros. (Ah, She does always manage to intervene when the time is right, doesn't She ?) I talked my way into an invitation and became a regular attendee and eventually a coven member, participating in, writing, and performing a number of rituals. A little less than a year ago I left Dancejoy's coven and joined a Traditional Gardnerian coven in L.A. With credit for knowledge gained through reading and in Thalassa Kai Oros, and having participated in training classes and several Sabbat and Full Moon rituals, I was Initiated into the Gardnerian Craft August last.

Eclectic vs. Traditional - I've experienced both types of covens, having started in Dancejoy's extremely eclectic coven and moved to the very traditional L.A. Coven (our Outer Court name).

While it was never dull being a member of Thalassa Kai Oros, I often had a sense of rootlessness. We had no common traditions beyond a very loose overall structure, no foundation upon which to build our rituals, not even a common language for what we were doing. On the other hand, we were free to draw on the whole body of pagan literature and world mythos. We were forced to be creative, to read widely, and to try new ideas. Yet, I found myself wondering, "Just what do we believe? What aspects of the Sabbats do we choose to emphasize? What dieties should we invoke? etc." I had a growing sense of unease, a desire for more direction, a need for a common ground from which to work - a need for roots.

I began to look for a different approach to Wicca. A call to Judy in New York led me to get in touch with Morven Forest, who was to become my new HPS, a Traditional Gardnerian. (Her hand again- we had met previously at a TKO

ritual, and I had felt instantly comfortable and at ease with Lady Morven) In the L.A. Coven, we have a common tradition, set ritual material, a standard way of doing circles, a commonality of magical practice and power raising techniques. We are learning to cast Circles, so that the casting becomes automatic, internalized; to raise and use power effectively, in a group and on our own; to function as a cohesive group with common knowledge. I feel a sense of groundedness, a sense of history, a common tradition shared with other covens - a sense of having roots.

Eclectic vs. Traditional - Which is better? Neither. They are merely different ways of worshipping and practicing the Craft. However, personally, I feel that a solid foundation in Traditional Wicca is a stronger base from which to start. It will give me the knowledge and experience with which to evaluate the vast body of pagan materials available, and will sharpen my ability to discriminate and choose between those materials, should I desire to broaden my own practice of the Craft as I grow and mature.

Kestral ▽

THE ILLUSION OF REALITY: A SOLID FACT  
by Rita Prince Winston

The desk at which I'm typing is made of nice, sturdy wood. If I knock on it with my fist, it produces a nice, loud, noise. If I knock harder, I hurt my hand. That's reality for you: solid matter.

It doesn't require relativity or quantum physics to know that matter is made of atoms, and that atoms consist of electrons in planetary orbits around a nucleus. The distance between the nucleus and an electron is relatively the same as the distance between the Sun and a planet, and it's all empty space. A lecturer on Zen commented: "We're all 99.9% Void already. It's that last .1% that's hard."

So how is it that empty space hurts my hand when I punch it? The electrons give the illusion of solidity by moving very very fast, the same way that the blades of a spinning fan can look like a solid disk.

The appearance of the desk is equally artificial. We think "We see the desk" but actually we respond to rays of light striking our retinas. Light rays don't actually have color, just wavelengths: the cone cells in our eyes automatically assign different colors to different wavelengths. And three dimensionality, distance, continuity (all the things that distinguish between eyesight and an abstract painting) are computed by the optic lobe of the brain before the final picture enters the conscious mind. Even before atomic theory, the philosopher John Locke realized that the appearance of an object is dependent on the person perceiving it: for example, some people are color blind, and some people hallucinate.

The discoveries of modern physics are even weirder. I remember when I was taught in high school Physics that an electron is not a tiny sphere whirling in its orbit, but a "probability wave" resembling a diffuse cloud. I can't explain it to you because I don't understand it myself, but that night I had a nightmare in which my whole body dissolved into the universe and my consciousness became a diffuse cloud with no self nor center, but a vague awareness of events in many widespread planets and galaxies. I woke up screaming.

And light waves are not waves in the "luminiferous ether" like water waves are waves in water. Light waves are waves without a medium: more "probability waves"!

Time is equally odd. THE TAO OF PHYSICS imagines a million mile tall dancer who moves her hand and her foot. A watcher on a planet near her head sees her move her hand first, as the light waves arrive sooner from her hand since her hand is closer than her foot and they have less distance to travel. A watcher on a planet near her foot sees her foot move before her hand for the same reason. Both observers are right; according to Einstein, there is no "before," "after," or "at the same time."

Neon Lotus, by Marc Laidlaw (Bantam/Spectra, 1988)

Technological Tantra! Computer Buddhas! Liberation theology, Tibetan-style! And, just to keep things interesting, love, sex, death, hope, and airplanes.

I think this is the first science-fiction (as opposed to fantasy) novel set in the context of Tibetan mythology. The action takes place some two hundred years in the future, when the mummified body of the Last Dalai Lama (the one we know now) is a tourist attraction in the Tibetan-exile portion of India.

A Tibetan scientist is close to completing a computer project which will result in the fulfilling of a prophecy concerning the liberation of Tibet from its Chinese invaders. Just as he is about to program the final equation, he is assassinated by a genetically-engineered three-eyed humanoid, who then self-destructs. But all is not lost. The scientist is reincarnated as a girl child of American and Swiss parentage, who speaks fluent Tibetan at age three.

When she grows up, she joins the Tibetan freedom fighters (who know who she is), and is taken to a remarkable shrine. There, an idol of Chenrezi (the thousand-armed Boddhisattva of Compassion) reveals itself to be an ancient computer. Originally, its mysterious designers had included five of the ornaments ascribed to Chenrezi as parts of the machine: the Wish-Fulfilling Gem, a golden wheel, a lotus with crystal petals, a pitcher of divine nectar, and a golden vajra (a wand or scepter in the form of a stylized lightning bolt). These items have been stolen and dispersed throughout Tibet. The Chenrezi machine cannot perform at full power without the ornaments, but if they are restored, Chenrezi can bring about the liberation of Tibet, and thereby the spiritual advancement of the world. Our heroine's task is to find all the missing parts and bring them back to the Chenrezi computer; the body of the book describes her adventures as she acquires them one by one.

In addition to being the reincarnation of a Tibetan scientist, she also receives an indwelling divinity, or yidam--Rainbow Tara, a mischievous but compassionate (and iridescent) preteen goddess. Along the way, our heroine and her divinity meet up with a Tibetan pilot (the love interest), a bureaucrat possessed by demons, and a tribe of nomads who disguise advanced technology as primitive artifacts.

I've oversimplified quite a bit; the story is complex, plausible, and gripping. Reading this book sent me scurrying for my (inadequate) references on Tibetan religion and mythology (although there is a glossary at the back). All in all, it's an astonishing book, and I recommend it gushingly to any Proteid or Pagan whose interests include Tibet, Buddhism, and/or Tantra.

Ashta'arArthura

#### BELTANE POEM

Tonight the Year Wheel turns once more  
And brings us back to Summer's door.  
We light the sacred Beltane pyre,  
And jump for luck o'er Lord Bel's fire.

Lord Bel, horned god with fiery mane,  
Unto our Lady's presence came,  
Awak'ning Danu's sleeping womb,  
And making all the flowers to bloom.

The Old King on the night must die,  
Then be reborn, to with Her lie,  
The May Queen, she of beauteous face,  
And Horned Lord, in love embrace.

Their union in the morning dew  
Of New Years' Day, all Life renews,  
The crops and fields now healthy grow,  
Their bounty ours at autumn's mow.

Tonight the veil of worlds is thin,  
Departed spirits may rush in,  
To dance with us and join our rites,  
And celebrate all through the night.

We round the May Pole, ribbons weave,  
Our hearts' desires in thought conceive  
While dancing round in airy flight,  
We laugh and sing in wild delight.

Exhausted, we then stop and rest,  
The cakes and wine are joyf'ly blessed,  
Our rites be done now for this year,  
We've conjured well and summer's here.

-By Kestrai ▽

#### FROM THE EDITOR

This is the Beltane ish of PS, which suggests that next is the Midsummer '88 ish, with deadline sometime very early in June '88. I beg for material and mailing addresses.

#### LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

Black Lotus, from Proteus Coven in NYC, writes: "Effective Beltane, I'll be starting Mnemosynides (Children of Memory) Coven, both Gardnerian and Protean in lineage. Ophion will be joining me; he wants to do more "shamanic" work, which he can't do in Proteus....Now that I've started attending night school, my guru Judy has revised my mantra from: ASSHOLE, GET YOUR DEGREE, to: WRITE FOR PROTEAN SYNTHESIS! In my copious free time. However, I have another writing assignment (for pay!) I'm excited about. Ken & Mercy [who are not, as far as I know, Proteids - Rita] are pubbing an underground comix line (Evolution Comix), and I'm doing a strip for them about three women of widely differing ages, who coven together & run an occult bookstore. It's to be called CRONE AND COMPANY, and it will show magical workings "right" for once. Know any possible distributors in LA?"

#### ANOTHER LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

Dana Morgan, whose new address is Box 1464, Grand Rapids MI 49501-1464, writes: "In response to "What is a Coven?" in PS#5, several thoughts to share...

Pg 6, Para 3, about mid-paragraph: "...she can't use the Forum to tell her problems against coveners." That way lies the dread demon Burnout, better known as Super-Priestess! If in this meeting she is simply one of the crew, then she has as much right to be dissatisfied as any other member. If she is attending the meeting as HPs, rights and privileges intact, then she still has a right to address her dissatisfactions but now in terms of problem behaviors (rather than individuals).

Example: Unreliability about start time. HPs: "I have a problem with our start times being delayed. If Circle is called for 8, and we don't start until 9, then we run til 3 a.m. and I have to be up at 6. Folks who are on-time have to wait for one or two others, and so waste their valuable time. If there is a good reason for the delay, should we be scheduling later? What's really happening here? And whose problem is it?" Make THEM answer!

Pg 7 Para 3: Barriers against Intimacy. True story: Covener commuted 45 mi each way every week or two for a year, then decided to stop. Came back 10 months later, hung around 6 weeks, and split. Repeated that patter 2 or 3 times over next 5 years. Then complained of feeling dis-associated, not intimate. When asked what intimacy he wanted when he had withdrawn from coven, he used the distance excuse. This covener and I now live in the same town, about 3 mi apart, and I'm doing covenwork here since Midsummer last. Old friends (of his) coven with me regularly, at least twice per month, driving 45 mi to do so. He has appeared at Circle twice, once 45 minutes late. I ask you: whose problem is it? The moral of the story is: A Bronx cheer to excuses!

Question boils down to WILL THEY WORK? If you see sincere effort, keep them. If you see lots of hot air, they're wasting your precious time and energy and skills! And I assure you that if you don't value your skills highly, absolutely no one else will either. Furthermore, I say to you: It is ABSOLUTELY fair and reasonable for a teacher to ask a student to modify behaviors which impede enlightenment! (Including, but not limited to, personal irresponsibility.)

Pg 7 Para 3. Temper tantrums are inappropriate behavior past age 3. If we are all grownups here, and if one member is consistency distressed by confrontation, then a) the style (too accusing? confrontive? angry?) needs to be evaluated, and b) the member needs to be evaluated, and c) if a compromise cannot be found, "then get thee hence, for the Craft must ever survive". Or outplaced to another coven. I called an Elders' Council once over a troublesome student; he was impressed by the fact that discipline would be kept, and I gained new insight into how to best handle his needs.

My answer to it all, for your amusement file: I'm an arbitrary bitch, and won't take (or keep) anyone who won't work or who causes unnecessary dissension. Re-read the first part: I AM an arbitrary bitch. I don't gotta be right, I don't gotta be anyone's salvation -- I just gotta give everyone an even chance -- and keep the damn thing running. (It leaves 'em free to hate me, too.) The payoff for students: I'm good, and I train the best. (Not a little bit of ego, eh? :-) )

Rita here. Thank you, Dana, I sincerely enjoyed your letter. I should learn to adopt "I'm an arbitrary bitch" as my motto (New Age jargon: "give myself permission"), then I wouldn't raise the following issues: #) How can I, in conscience, ask students to modify behaviors which impede enlightenment, when I am a mass of unenlightened behaviors myself, everything from overeating to phobias? I've been known to throw temper tantrums, too. #) When I myself try to evaluate the style I myself used to confront someone, I fall into an endless spiral of subjectivity. BTW, what people were in the Council of Elders you convened: HPsses and HPs of local covens, or the second and third degrees of your own coven?

Wow, this has been a very personal reply from me. When I started PS, I resolved that I wasn't going to use it as just a personal forum to shoot my mouth off, so if anybody is offended by me doing same, just let me know and I'll stop. Try to stop.

SHADES OF PAGAN by Rita Prince Winston

Once upon a time, a friend explained to me about lumpers and splitters. "Lumpers" focus on the similarities between specimens, and "splitters" focus on the differences. She said this happens even in Biology: some biologists say that there is only one species of Norway rat, and some say that there are eight different species! Being a "splitter" myself, I have found this distinction tremendously useful in all subjects.

Being a splitter, I offer you a rainbow (or gray scale) of Pagans.

"Back to Nature" is a life-style word. "Metaphysical" is a philosophy word. Neither means any particular religion. "Pagan" is a religion word (and therefore I capitalize it), but a very vague one. It includes many different religions, for example: Hinduism, Hellenistic Mysteries, Roman imperial religion, Paleolithic Shamanism, Aztec imperial religion, Medicine Wheel, Wicca, the Druid Order founded in the 1700s, Odinism (both the good kind and the Nazi kind), Taoism, Voodoo.

When I say "I am a Pagan", this is a true statement, but it means "I belong to a Pagan religion", not "I belong to all Pagan religions".

The particular Pagan religion I belong to is commonly called Witchcraft or Wicca. (It has denominations such as Traditional, Eclectic, Feminist, Gay, Radical, and Ethnic, which some commentators think are separate religions, but that's a digression.)

People who belong to this religion are commonly called Witches or Wiccans. (The word "witch" (note: no capital letter) is also used for people who do traditional folk magic for practical goals, with no particular religion involved, but that's another digression.)

There is a theory that "Witch", "initiate", and "priest/ess" are roughly synonymous words, but that theory leaves a lot of people out. First, there are people who believe in the Wiccan religion and attend public Circles at the Sabbats, but who are not called to study the Craft in any depth. These people are commonly called Pagans, which doesn't distinguish them from Hindus, or NeoPagans, which doesn't distinguish them from modern Druids and Odinists. I feel that a word is needed for such people. Wic-symp for "wicca sympathizer"? FOW for "Friend of Wicca"? Fellow Traveller? Witchian?

Then there are a variety of students, neophytes, apprentices, dedicants, and pre-initiates, who are studying Wicca and practising Wicca, and look to me like Witches, but who haven't been initiated. Some of them will never choose to be initiated, finding that the celebration of Sabbats and Moons, meditation, magick, and light study of the Craft fill their spiritual needs: they are not called to commit themselves to the Gods to be priest/esses.

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DEAR LADY MANNERS  
reprinted from Pagana #31; All-Fools '86

Dear Lady Manners,

There is not enough room in the closet of our temple room for the ceremonial robes of all the members of our coven. Our High Priestess says that space should be reserved for her use, because of her rank. The coven members in whose house the temple room is located feel that space should be allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis. The female members of the coven feel that they should have first priority, thereby symbolizing the emphasis in our tradition on Goddess worship. What do you suggest?

---Confused in Des Moines

Dear Confused,

Traditionally, rank hath its privileges, and the correct order is: High Priestess, High Priest, Maiden, Summoner, Cellarer (if any), other female officers (if any), other male officers (if any), female Elders, male Elders, female 2nd°, male 2nd°, female 1st°, male 1st°, female dedicants, male dedicants. If guests are present, they go immediately ahead of the host coveners of their own initiatory degree, females before males. The same order of privilege applies to the ritual bath.

The best eventual solution, of course, is to accomodate everyone. I suggest that the coveners take turns going to the airport one day a week. Wear robes and carry a basket. Approach each person entering the airport, and say, "If you care to make a donation, I am not going to tell you about my religion." Within a few weeks, you should have raised the funds to hire a building contractor to add a nice large walk-in closet to the covenstead.

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Dear Lady Manners,

There's a guy who comes to all the local open Sabbats. He won't keep his hands to himself. During the meeting dance, he tries to tongue-kiss all the women. I've stopped going to most of the open festivals because of this creep; this leaves me isolated. What can I do?

---Troubled in River City

Dear Troubled,

The first course of action is, before the next Sabbat, to discuss the problem of this coprocephalous individual's behavior with the Elders of the coven(s) hosting the Sabbats. It is to them that responsibility for the physical and magical safety and well-being of the Circle and its participants falls. They should investigate the matter and bar the offender from subsequent Circles if the evidence warrants. Alternatively, they may simply require him to correct his behavior, reminding him that "Perfect Love and Perfect Trust" are not automatic, but must be fostered by all participants in a Circle if it is to be successful. At the least, they will arrange for their Summoner, Dragon, or other security officer(s) to keep an eye on the offender and eject him if he misbehaves further.

Anyone bothered by someone's gross misbehavior at a Craft gathering should request the aid of the Summoner, Dragon, or other security officer(s), whose purview includes handling such difficulties. If that officer is not available, notify the High Priest/ess, who will see to it.

If these measures produce no result, deck the bastard.

LEAVES RUSTLING IN THE WIND  
by Connie Healy  
Proteus Coven

She's a brown leaf now  
She's been connected all her life to the tree  
She's been fed through the trunk of a large oak.

Now she's

Falling  
gently  
to the ground.

The other leaves, rustling their songs of sorrow join her  
They lie there  
Together  
They become the ground for spring-buds  
Like the young who will remember the old ones, like the  
Leaves rustling in the wind.

\*\*\*\*\*

MOON-GODDESS  
by Connie Healy  
Proteus Coven

She changes  
She is herself  
And she is not  
She is one and she is two.  
She is the artist who sees creation  
Through to the beginning  
And up to its apparent end.

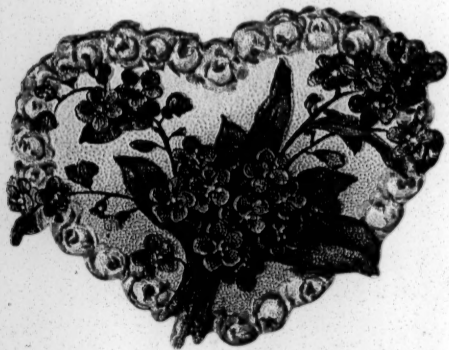
She is there when you return from your world's journey  
To welcome you back  
To the eternal  
To the new  
To the old  
To the wise one-  
--who changes.

\*\*\*\*\*

GODDESS INVOCATION  
by Connie Healy  
Proteus Coven

Maiden of our hearts who makes music within  
Nymph who jumps for joy and sings at all our creations  
Mother who nourishes us with daily light  
Wise woman of the Universal Soul  
Who teaches all the lessons to the world's children  
Join us in our circle as we call you now.

Valerie Voigt  
Zephyr Starwaterz  
PO Box 9494  
San Jose CA 95157



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A Protean Family Newsletter

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The nice people in Proteus sent me so much material that I think I can do a special ish before the Midsummer ish. So next ish is still the Midsummer '88 ish and the deadline is still very early in June '88.

The material they sent me includes a letter written in four colors of marker pen:

LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

(red)

Hi, Rita...No, we haven't met yet...Technophilia is Triton's and mine, if you don't want to wait for our tape, we used kind of spacy stuff like Holst's "Mercury" and Todd Rundgren's "Road to Utopia"...This has been Sky Dancer: blessed be!

(orange)

Hi, Kitten!...So much has gone on since you left, there isn't time to tell you! I've been married and am moving to Delaware after I graduate. Hence the poem. Keep it coming, we love it...B.B! Triton

(purple)

Dear Rita...Greetings -- the assembled mob has finally figured out a way to get me to put pen to paper and say hello. I might be moving to Shorakoppic real soon now -- just looked at an apartment yesterday. I'll let you know what happens -- I hope I'll see you at a festival or somewhere soon....Love, Night Rainbow.

(green)

Hi, Rita -- I only spoke to you (on the phone) a couple of days ago....My submissions were mailed out on Thursday (letter was dated Sunday)...Love, Judy

Rita here. Actually, I met Sky Dancer at the Empirecon (an sf convention) July 4th weekend 1984, not long before I left NYC. I haven't seen Triton since I left NYC. He and Sky Dancer are married. The poem will appear nextish.

Shorakoppic means "in the forest" in the language of the local American Indians, giving the name "Inwood" for the neighborhood of Northern Manhattan where the Shorakoppic village used to be. My vague and unreliable recollection is that they belonged to the Piscataway tribe and spoke a Delaware language.

LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

from Rita Prince Winston

I was absolutely delighted that Yona sent PS a letter about what it means to be Wiccan clergy. If she hadn't written voluntarily, I would have asked her to write, since she is the only person I know who has experienced being both a Christian minister and a Wiccan priestess.

And I am particularly pleased that her informed opinion is that Witches should not attempt to turn ourselves into carbon copies of mainstream clergy.

However, I have some questions about her definition of Wiccan clergy. Yona's list of questions (I paraphrase: see lastish for the exact words) asked whether everyone in the coven takes hisir turn as HPs or HP, pulls hisir

own weight, avoids backbiting and negative magick, and can a covener with a problem always find someone to lend a sympathetic ear. Except for taking one's turn as HP/s, are those questions the test of a Pagan minister or just of an ethically good person? I'm not trying to minimize the value of being an ethically good human being, but if you change the word "coven" to "community", any Christian or Buddhist or atheist, even, minister or lay congregant would try to live in such a way as to answer those questions in a positive way. Those questions don't distinguish our religion from others, and don't distinguish clergy from laity.

Incidentally, there have been a whole mess of psych studies about the benefit of some good listening and a little amateur counselling. Many studies have found that telling one's problems to an amateur is just as beneficial as telling one's troubles to a professional, but other studies have found that the benefit of talking to an amateur is temporary and the benefit of talking to a trained professional is permanent. Supposing that trained counsellors do benefit their clients, and that other religions offer pastoral counselling by ministers trained in counsellors, how are people in our religion to benefit from trained counsellors?

The question I left to later (meaning now) is whether all the coveners take their turns as HPs or HP. This seems to me not so much a question of ethics, as of skill and knowledge at ritual. Skill and knowledge at ritual is often considered a difference between clergy and laity, and skill and knowledge at ritual are the qualities tested by requiring scripting and officiating a Sabbat ritual as the qualification for first degree.

The idea of priesthood as ritual specialists is not exactly new. It is often believed that the first temple religion viewed the gods much like human monarchs. The temple was the house of the god, the priest and priestesses were the domestic servants and/or courtiers, the idol stood in for the deity. The priest/esses gave the idol a morning bath, dressed it and fed it breakfast, took it in a palanquin to visit other gods in their houses, flattered it with hymns of praise, entertained it with song and dance, bribed it with presents (libations, oblations, sacrifice), and begged favors (petitionary prayer) when they figured the god was in a good mood.

All these tasks were rituals, adorned with poetry, music, vestments, incense, altar vessels of gold and jewels. All these beauty induces peak experiences, and the clergy have the privilege of devoting their full time to spirituality. The common people have no place except to bring sacrifices and watch the major holiday rituals from an outer courtyard. Only the local rulers and rich people have the privilege of coming (with piles of gold as offerings) to consult the temple's diviners and healers and to pray in an inner courtyard for the god to send an advising dream.

I hope my strong attraction to this vision shines through my words. However, I don't believe in gods who seek such expensive, petty, and useless worship. I don't believe in religion which excludes the worshippers. The definition of Wiccan religion has to be more than doing rituals for the gods to watch.

Wiccan religion has to do something for the worshippers. To provide a path between the worshippers and the gods, to provide moving and meaningful rituals, and also to help people in their own lives. Academic theology is an amusing hobby, but as far as helping people goes, it's a bunch of bullshit words whose meanings are not connected to reality. The history of our religion is interesting (would anyone like to teach a correspondence class in History of Wicca?), but solves no current problems. Divination (astrology, Tarot, I Ching, etc) and healing (herbalism, therapeutic touch, psychotherapy) are the traditional tasks of Witches, and fall into the Pastoral Counselling category.

There is also the Ethics category. We are all very good at arguing about Ethics, but what else do we do? It isn't our religion to preach sermons in our Circles!

AND NOW A WORD ...

One thing I've been trying to avoid is using Protean Synthesis to pontificate, but the time seems to have come. My children, we have reached the matter of self-definition. (yes, this is embarrassing and awkward.)

In FS #6, Yona says she has been initiated both as a Protean and as a Gardnerian. Kestral speaks of having left Dancejoy's Protean coven to join the Traditional Gardnerian L.A. Coven. Not so, kids. You have been initiated both Eclectic/Protean and Gardnerian/Protean. Protean is a common denominator that both of your covens share. Proteus Coven itself is a Gardnerian coven.

Lady Morven of the L.A. Coven is my great-granddaughter, through Marion and Meredydd. Perhaps at one point our bond was a theoretical one, existing mainly on a lineage chart, but it came to life in the tempest of last summer's CoG Grand Council. Since then, I have not attended or conducted a Circle without wearing a ring that Morven made and gave to me, a tangible reminder of our connection.

Similarly, Thalassa kai Dros is Eclectic only because Dancejoy wills it so. She is a fully qualified Gardnerian High Priestess. Three years ago some Gardnerians acted in a manner she found offensive. She chose to leave the Gardnerian community - but not to break her tie with Proteus, the coven in which she was trained. I think this choice was her right, and was made with due thought and integrity. I will not break my tie with her simply because she uses a different label.

Proteus, remember, is the great shape-shifter. Some of us are Gardnerian and some of us are Eclectic. The love and trust that connect us all direct us to accept our differences in the spirit of family.

I think it's time I put out how I see the definitions. If I don't - and this thing keeps growing as it has been - after my death some damn fool is going to try and make my each and every word into The Law. It happened to Jesus and they tried it on Gerald Gardner. By being very clear about what I think is essential, I hope to head it off right now.

So, thus saith Grandmother Proteus:

Gardnerians will -

- 1) Use an approved Gardnerian initiation. As most of you know, Daystar and I substantially rewrote the initiation and elevation rituals used in Proteus Coven. Our new rituals were approved by my Queen. In fact, after consultation with her, we changed our rewrites significantly.

You, too, may rewrite, but to qualify as Gardnerian, any rewriting must be cleared by your Queen - and will not be

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cleared unless it contains those elements my Queen defined as essential.

- 2) Pass on the traditional Gardnerian Book of Shadows, in full, whether or not you actually use any of it. This is so that people down the line from you will have the option to return to more traditional formats, and not be limited by your choices.

The rule is that you may add materials to the Gardnerian Book, as long as these additions are properly signed and dated, but you may not delete. Anything you add to the Book, however, becomes subject to traditional Gardnerian secrecy. We in Proteus Coven have chosen to keep our newly written materials in a completely separate book. This way we are free to share our own creations with Craft friends of all traditions.

- 3) Feel a family connection, particularly with your own lineage, but also with the larger Gardnerian community. This is very subjective, I know, but there are two practical things you can do about it.

One is to subscribe to The Hidden Path, (c/o Windwalker P.O. Box 891 Park Forest, IL 60466 - sub \$12.00/year), a magazine which serves as the "voice of Gardnerian covens." It's the best way I know of to keep up with Gardnerian thinking and doings. Since some of the discussions involve Gardnerian mysteries, you will need the vouch of a Gardnerian priestess to subscribe.

If you're feeling prosperous some year, you may also want to attend the annual Samhain Gathering in Louisville, KY. (Actually, they usually hold it a week or so before the Sabbat, so attendance will not interfere with your coven participation). It seems that most active Gardnerians live in the Midwest these days, so the Louisville weekends have a warm, "family reunion" feel. If you go, be prepared for very traditional Gardnerian ritual practice. Details of each year's Gathering are announced in The Hidden Path.

#### Proteans will -

- 1) Feel like they are a part of the Protean family. Again, subjective. Some people have hived from Proteus, some have grafted themselves on. Some identify as Gardnerian and others as Eclectic. Many have never met each other.

Protean Synthesis was long a dream of mine, a way to weave a web to connect the widespread branches. I'm especially pleased that it has drawn out the special viewpoint and expertise of people like Yona. I never found the time; bless and thank you, Rita!

- 2) Adhere to Protean ethical principles - here in New York generally expressed as "We don't force, we don't charge, and we don't snitch." For the last year or so, people trained in Proteus Coven have taken formal Dedicant Oaths to respect confidentiality, avoid invasive magic, and not accept payment for practicing or teaching the Craft. But years before that, we had an informal understanding that these standards were binding - an essay called "Basics for Beginners" that each new student read and assented to before beginning training. The heart of that essay is excerpted below.

The problem is that some of the grafted-on folk were never asked to make these commitments, and it seems unfair to ask for them ex post facto.

My feelings about ethics have not changed over the years. They are derived from my own early training and from the Gardnerian Craft Laws. What I have not always known - and some of my earlier attempts were pretty poor - was how to make these ethics consistent and binding. If I had it to do over again, formal pledging would be required for Proteans, and our ethics would define us to the larger Pagan Community.

- 3) Be achievers. In general, Proteans seem to be involved in actively creating neo-Pagan culture and community. For example, a full third of the current Board of Directors of Covenant of the Goddess is Protean. Other Proteans edit respected Craft magazines, lead campus Pagan groups at their universities, serve the Old Ones with music, art and scholarship. While this is hardly a requirement, let's face it, the Old Lady is an unabashed elitist.

I'm proud of my talented and dedicated family. [Another important function of Protean Synthesis is to let us know about what all the kinfolk are doing.] I have always believed that people's gifts flower best in a free environment, and you all are the proof!

So there you have it. Being Gardnerian and being Protean are independent variables. You can be either without the other, or you can be both together.

It pleases me that Proteans bridge the Traditional/Eclectic gap that elsewhere rends the Craft. I believe that a common ethical commitment and a sense of family are far more important than ritual formats. The Earth Religion we seek to reconstruct, after all, flourished first among tribal peoples. It is in the context of newly formed and freely chosen tribes that we can nurture the Old Ways again.

Judy Harrow  
HPs, Proteus Coven

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EXCERPTED FROM THE PROTEUS "Basics for Beginners" ESSAY

There are three major ground rules in Proteus Coven that we feel are required for good ethics and safety - in the Craft those two are usually indistinguishable. Your acceptance of these three basic limitations is a non-negotiable and absolute condition of your working with us. Further, we ask for your commitment to pass these three limitations on to any students of your own, along with the requirement that they pass them to theirs. It would pain us to know that anybody we were even very indirectly responsible for bringing into the Craft was violating these basic principles. The three limitations are:

- 1) **YOU MAY NOT VIOLATE CONFIDENTIALITY OR RITUAL PRIVACY.** Each Witch or Pagan has the absolute right to decide for themselves who shall know how much about their religious choices. You may tell as much as you want to about yourself, but nothing at all about any co-religionist without their express consent. Fred and Judy are media Witches, so it's OK to talk about us.

Similarly, any person who asks for healing, divination or other magical assistance comes under the full protection of traditional Craft secrecy. Their identity is absolutely confidential. It does not matter whether they have sought help from you individually or the whole group.

The privacy of our rituals is important, too. What we have inherited or written is not necessarily any better or more powerful ritual than any other. But one of the most important things the Craft has to offer you is a strong sense of belonging - to the intimate family of Proteus Coven and to the broader Gardnerian community. Having some practices that are "ours only" can serve as recognition symbol and boundary maintainer [it's the old "secret club handshake" idea, and it works!]. So we ask that you do not reveal materials from the Gardnerian Book of Shadows. Newly written material may be shared with others only if you have the permission of the authors.

- 2) **YOU MAY NOT ACCEPT PAYMENT FOR TEACHING OR PRACTICING THAT WHICH YOU LEARN IN PROTEUS.** The fact that your training here is our free gift to you obligates you to use it or pass it on, should you choose to, only as a free gift. You are not placing yourself under any obligation to teach, although we predict and hope that you will eventually want to. There is no problem with your accepting payment for teaching any other subject matter.
- 3) **YOU MAY NOT WORK ANY MAGIC AFFECTING ANY OTHER PERSON WITHOUT THAT PERSON'S EXPRESS CONSENT.** Not even a healing; not even "for their own good." No exceptions and no arguments. We encourage you to work magic for things you want for yourself (e.g. job magic, psychic self-defense). An ethical approach is almost always possible. If you're having trouble figuring one out, talk it over with us or with the group.

## Technology and the Craft

### The Future of Humanity

#### Removing the Barriers to Spaceflight

Before beginning, all fold paper planes, add whatever symbols seem appropriate.

#### Techno lesson #1: Making Fire:

HP tries to light fire in Cauldron using firesticks;

HPs enters, watches, lights charcoal with Sacred Bic; HP lights Altar & Quarter candles.

"Technology can make things both less effortful and more dependable."

#### Bless the Elements (HPs)

By the wood fires of our grandparents  
And the fusion fires of our grandchildren  
I bless and purify you

By the airy realms our grandparents watched  
And the airy realms our grandchildren will walk  
I bless and purify you

By the oceans that fed our grandparents  
And the oceans that will house our grandchildren  
I bless and purify you

By the Earth our grandparents rose from  
And the Earth our grandchildren will watch rise  
I bless and purify you

#### Cast Circle (HP)

As the Moon cuts a circle round the Earth  
As the Earth cuts a circle round the Sun  
So I cut this Circle round us

As the rains wash the mountains  
As the oceans wash the beaches  
So I cleanse this Circle and we within it

As the Moon charges the restless waters  
As the Sun charges all that is green and growing  
So I charge this Circle and we within it

#### Invoke Quarters

I invoke Thee, Mighty Ones of the East; bring us Your gifts of knowledge and watch over us in this Circle. Come to us, in the name of Athena WiseWoman! Hail and Welcome!

I invoke Thee, Mighty Ones of the South; bring us Your gifts of will and watch over us in this Circle. Come to us, in the name of Brigid SmithMistress! Hail and Welcome!

I invoke Thee, Mighty Ones of the West; bring us Your gifts of emotion and watch over us in this Circle. Come to us, in the name of Poseidon ShipMaster! Hail and Welcome!

I invoke Thee, Mighty Ones of the North; bring us Your gifts of dedication and watch over us in this Circle. Come to us, in the name of Ptah CraftsMaster! Hail and Welcome!

All Breathe, Ground, and Center

Techno lesson #2: Casio drum for tired Priestess:

HPs starts drumming and shoulder acts up again; HP fetches Casio...

"Technology can compensate for physical limitations..."

Chant: She Changes Everything

Techno lesson #3: Pathworking on audio tape:

HP & HPs "argue" about who's going to lead the PW and who gets to go this time; then do working on tape.

"Technology can strengthen our rituals by enabling full participation."

Cakes & Wine & Sacred Bullshit

Cakes and wine, if convenient, should be Tang and spaceship-shaped cookies. Sacred bullshit should include people's concerns with the whole question of technology, the ethics of population & colonization, and anything else anybody brings up.

The Working: Everybody needs to now find his/her paper airplane, and hold it up in a takeoff position.

Power chant: Countdown; when you reach 'Zero!', fling the airplanes!

Grounding chant: Earth below us, drifting falling  
Floating weightless, coming home

Other workings, as appropriate

Techno lesson #4: There is no Techno lesson #4

Dismiss Quarters

I thank Thee, Mighty Ones of the East, in the name of Lady Athena, for Your presence and guidance at our rite, and ere you depart for Your Airy realms, We bid you Hail and Farewell!

I thank Thee, Mighty Ones of the South, in the name of Lady Brigid, for our presence and guidance at our rite, and ere you depart for your Fiery realms, We bid you Hail and Farewell!

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I thank Thee, Mighty Ones of the West, in the name of Lord Poseidon, for your presence and guidance at our rite, and ere you depart for your Watery realms, We bid you Hail and Farewell!

I thank Thee, Mighty Ones of the North, in the name of Lord Ptah, for your presence and guidance at our rite, and ere you depart for your Earthy realms, We bid you Hail and Farewell!

Close (HP)

Fire, seal the Circle round  
Let it fade beneath the ground  
Let all things be as they were since the beginning of time

*My Dancer  
of  
Proteus \**

*Triton \*  
Proteus Coven*

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List of props:

Paper & pens/crayons/pencils for paper planes  
Real drum plus drum machine (we use a teeny Casio keyboard)  
Cassette deck and pathworking tape (will be sent under separate cover real soon now)  
Firesticks (see Boy Scout Handbook for design, but don't make them too authentic; we do not want to start a fire on the HPS's living room floor.)  
'Sacred' Bic lighter  
Usual ritual gear (athames, cup, incense, rubber duck, water, salt, &c, &c)

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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This is Midsummer '88. The next ish scheduled is Lamas '88.

PROTEAN SYNTHESIS: MORE ABOUT COVENS

In my column in the Beltane ish of PSN, I wrote about the potential for intimacy in a coven and the potential for conflict. I wrote so much more, or so much more intensely, about the potential for conflict, that many readers may wonder whether covening is worth all that hassle. They may decide that it's better to work solitary.

The analogy I made between coven and marriage still holds -- I haven't escaped it yet! -- yielding another analogy: between being a solitary Witch and being single. Some Witches are called to work solitary: it's the path that their hearts and their gods have chosen for them. Some Witches work solitary because of constraints geography or time or secrecy. Some Witches work solitary because they haven't found the right coven yet.

One great advantage of working solitary is that it is an extremely private and personal practise of religion. It allows a great degree of intimacy with the gods worshipped, because the intimacy doesn't have to be shared with other people. The risk associated with that disadvantage is that you might wander off into subjectivity, fall into your own belly button, and never be seen again. Companions on the path help avoid that danger: they tell you when they notice you starting to act crazy. No advantage without a disadvantage: they tell you when they THINK you've started to act crazy, but can they tell the difference between craziness and enlightenment?

Anyway, another advantage of working solitary is that it's better than a bad

coven. Merely being a member of a group is not so wonderful that it's worth tying your time and your karma up with a group of unethical people, or a group of people so crazy that you can't cope with them, or even a group of very nice people who have not one interest in common with you. The great temptation always is to think: "We're all Witches. We have that in common", but one Witch may be a very Traditional Gardnerian and another an Icelandic-speaking Odinist and another an Eclectic Feminist. They are interested in different things, they do different rituals, and they have different beliefs. Naming the different Traditions made it more obvious, but sometimes there is just as much difference between two Witches in the same Tradition.

However, one advantage of being in a coven is that you can learn from coverers with different interests. If a Witch whose big passion is herbalism joins a coven specializing in Pagan music, she can teach a class on herbs to her coven, where all the coveners will learn a little, and maybe one of the coveners will discover that herbs are her heart's love. If the coven chooses to learn a new subject with no resident expert, they can study together. Psychological study after psychological study has found the advantages of co-operative learning. People learn better in groups, where they get to explain the material to each other. The people who are having trouble with one point get it explained, and the people doing the explaining also benefit: anyone who has taught knows that you learn more about your subject by teaching it. There is also the practical detail of only one person having to go to the library and bring the book back for everybody.

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Studying together merges into creating together. Many Eclectic covens are interested in creating new and beautiful rituals that express their theology, and beautiful rituals expressing theology are often inspired by a thought that comes up in a conversation about theology. My own interest at time is to re-design the eight Sabbats to fit the climate of Southern California, but this project is sort of stalled because it needs more people than just me. For example, I never thought of relating the Seasons to the Elements, but a friend who read my article last year remarked: "Winter Rain, Summer Fire, Autumn Wind....Spring must be Earth". Which is an example of social conversation, thus leading to another advantage of working with a coven: the social relationships. I believe in celebrating Sabbats with parties, and parties are more fun if there are people at them. Just as chanting is more fun with several voices, to do multi-part chants, and circle dances are more fun with a whole circle of dancers. Our religion believes in fun, and our religion believes in people sharing friendship, love, and loyalty. Membership in a good coven an act of love and pleasure.

#### NEW BEGINNINGS

Og go! Leave cave; find new hunting ground!

I will leave these caves of steel that thrust their teeth  
into an empty sky  
to a place where Mother Moon lives in a crowded house,  
and I do not.

Og go! Leave cave; find new hunting ground!

I will sleep listening to the wind whisper its secrets  
to the trees, and waken to the gossip of birds.

Og go! Leave cave; find new hunting ground!

I will warm myself beside a woodfire  
lit as a beacon so you may find me there.

Og go! Leave cave; find new hunting ground!

I will drink water that tastes of the deep Earth  
and swim the pond amidst the ducks.

Og go! Leave cave; find new hunting ground!

I will walk the ground so much softer beneath my feet  
than this concrete, across land that is my own.

Og go! Leave cave; find new hunting ground!

Triton  
Proteus Coven

## PASTORAL COUNSELING

There have been several questions raised of late about our ability to minister effectively to the needs of our own people. Particular areas of concern have included substance abuse and emotional distress of various sorts, as well as the ever-popular Clergy burnout. It has been repeatedly insinuated that we are without skills to address these problems; this statement is simply false. While nothing in this article should be taken as encouragement not to seek professional treatment if needed, or to abandon such treatment once started, I would encourage the on-hand Priesthood to try some of the techniques listed here, in the interest of fixing our own wherever possible without the need of going to a mundane source. (As we all know, they have been known to decide that our religious beliefs are de facto proof of various conditions including schizophrenia.)

The easiest and most efficacious techniques available to us for Pastoral Counseling are the ones we already use routinely in our ritual and other magickal workings: meditation, divination, active imaging, and other healing techniques.

### MEDITATION

Several techniques are available within this general framework of knowledge. To name just a few:

- \* Message meditation, in which you go to a sacred place (astral or mental), present the problem, and wait for messages.

One advantage of this technique is that with many emotional problems, just learning how to wait can be beneficial.

- \* Peaceful scene meditations, which function like biofeedback in clearing the psychophysical decks for new input.

- \* Younger or other self meditations (NOT recommended for possible schizoid conditions!) to clarify causes of present conditions and situations.

### ACTIVE IMAGING

Closely related to Meditation, it is a technique most useful when the problem can be visualized in some pretty concrete terms. If, for example, the problem is drinking to excess, and the course of treatment decided upon includes cutting down on consumption rather than cutting out entirely, perhaps the following imagery process could be useful:

"See yourself now at your favorite bar. Hear the music, smell the familiar smells, taste your favorite drink. Count the drinks you have enjoyed so far ... one, two. Now on three you have had enough. Picture your third drink, the satisfying taste of it ... and know that your body agrees with your mind, this is enough. A (Perrrier, Coke, coffee, orange juice, whatever) is just the thing your body would like next, wet and smooth and satisfying. Picture that next glass of Perrier (whatever) ... smell it, taste it, feel all of the cells of your body open up

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with joyful acceptance of the new choice you have made. When you are so full of the joy of that Perrier that you could burst, allow yourself to come forward slowly, bringing that sense of renewed control and joyous wellbeing forward with you into your waking self."

OK, so I don't write the world's best guided meditation scripts, and if you can do better, I strongly encourage you to do so. But we all do guided imagery of one form or another, AND THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON WE CAN'T USE IT TO HEAL OUR OWN!

### DIVINATION

I was going to write a fairly longish piece on using the Tarot for counseling, then I found out that somebody published the book. Called Tarot Therapy by Jan Woudhuysen, it's a MUST-READ! He's a professional, with great respect for symbology, borrowing our symbols and making them work.

But I will cop to not having finished the book as I write this glowing recommendation, so I do want to go on to say that we still need to work up a spread that will show forth causes for particular problems to our satisfaction. On this subject, my only comment is NOT THE CELTIC CROSS AGAIN! (That poor spread is so over-utilized, I'm not sure it can take another set of meanings!)

What would such a spread need to show us? My list reads:

- \* how we got here (problem's prime cause)
- \* how it got aggravated
- \* what supports the problem
- \* who benefits from it
- \* what's the elemental basis?
- \* is there a karmic lesson here?
- \* and what should we know that we're not asking?

Having put forth this list of thoughts, I'm going to retire to working on it, and watching to see if anybody else flashes on a solution, or wants to debate the questions, or ...

### HEALING

If you can find a physical basis, the alleviation of which would free up enough energy to affect the emental states of the entity, that is one way in which these techniques could help.

EXAMPLE: I have a covener whose blood sugar keeps his emotional states unbalanced -- he's diabetic. Stabilizing the blood sugar alleviates the physical cause, leaves the emotional more accessible.

In most emotional healing cases, we run closest to the possible allegations of placebo effect (and fraud, so keep money out of it!) -- what can be said is that the person really healed themselves. (True statement!--ask any shrink.)

BUT IT IS NOT INVALID MAGICK TO HELP ANOTHER HEAL THEMSELVES!!

So, onto some nuts-n-bolts doing it:

- \* Your basic arsenal will be candles, in red, blue, & gold.
- \* Add to that blessed salt, and the herb Blessed Thistle.
- \* Add rocks (for drawing), Tiger Balm (induce surface heat), a container for water, and a white candle to see by.

On the candles:

\* Red treats lethargy, energizes the system. Tiger Balm can be useful here, too, in increasing circulation (as in during a backrub). But be aware -- once you've re-energized the system, you're very likely to get an outpouring of whatever caused the withdrawal in the first place (most likely to appear as tears and/or rage). The salt and blessed thistle can be used in a purifying bath after the outburst.

\* Blue calms, but also depresses, so watch closely. It is very useful in cases of panic, extreme fear, or other states in which the person is so worked up that nothing is getting through to them. Match the candle gazing with deep breathing, and much comfort and reassurance, then leave candle burn for reinforcement while you go back to trying to talk out the problem. Pause during talk for more breathing and candle-watching as needed.

Here the rocks and water are also useful. If the individual can focus the source of their fear into a rock, it can then be buried. Water can be added to a large (moving, please) body of water if there is one nearby (do NOT use this to water the garden!). Use any transference mechanism you know.

\* Gold candles are used, as are white, to balance the system. In a condition where one is just a little bit out of control (which is not either related to being a little bit pregnant!), stability can be returned with gold and maybe an earth-centered grounding meditation.

The preceding are just some of the techniques which have made themselves known to me through practice and experimentation. I am sure that each of you have your own that are as good or better; I only offer these to answer the assertion that we have no techniques of our own with which to help our own. We do, we can, we have, and we are! Any comments or criticisms regarding these can be directed to me at Box 1464, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, or through the pages of Protean Synthesis.

Let there be peace --

Dana

## A CIRCLE FOR CATHARSIS

## Introduction:

One of my near and dear once spent an hour in a therapist's office kicking an innocent throw pillow around the room and screaming out rage at his abusive father. At the end of the hour, he had a broken foot -- and the first beginnings of a healed mind.

But we have learned that magic works through symbols. Calling an object by your abuser's name and then abusing that object is sympathetic magic used for the purpose of cursing. To throw a curse is to project one's worst feelings out into the world of form, and to invoke upon oneself the inevitable karmic feedback.

It is not our way to blast the crops and sour the milk. Wiccan tradition and plain common sense both tell us to avoid the practice of baneful magic. But, as usual, it's not quite as easy as just saying no.

Rape and child abuse, loved ones killed by muggers or drunk drivers, emotional manipulation and betrayal, economic exploitation and dishonest office politics - people hurt and victimize other people in many different ways every day. We are not immune.

At some point in our lives, probably every single one of us will feel violated by some other human being. Often our feelings will be based in fact. Whether they are or not, however, we need and deserve a safe way to discharge them.

Symbolic baneful actions are also cathartic actions. They drain and clear our poisonous feelings and allow our own emotional healing to begin. If we deny ourselves this outlet, what happens to the grief and pain and rage?

If projection is bad for us, introjection is even worse. Unreleased bad feelings are a major source of stress. In a very real sense, stress cripples and kills. Ulcers, strokes, heart attacks and more are all heavily stress-related. A simple refusal to engage in baneful magic could easily amount to punishing a victim by adding serious illness to the original harm.

I am part of the All. "An it harm none" is about me too. Release of my feelings is my right.

At first it seems like an insoluble paradox. But the same understanding of magic that forbids projection of our bad feelings can open a safe channel for those feelings. Here's one possible form:

## Preparation:

### 1) Understanding

Think about the Alcoholics Anonymous prayer. "Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can change, and the wisdom to know the difference." People of any religion can recognize the wisdom in those words. This ritual is intended to ease emotional pressure. I believe that is a step towards granting all three of those things to ourselves.

If your hurt is ongoing, you must take steps to stop it - leave the abusive relationship, begin searching for a new job, begin organizing politically to stop your oppression. What good this Circle does you will be temporary at best if you are not acting on both the magical and material planes to change the things you can change.

But some of our pain comes from old, old injuries. And some of our feelings are not based on fact at all. The source of those hurts cannot be changed, but the pain can be. This particular working is to release any bad feelings, not to judge them.

Don't worry about justice. You may be mistaken about who has hurt you, but nobody will be hurt by what we do here. All energy will be contained within the Circle. The object of this working is healing, not justice. You deserve this healing simply because you hurt, and even if you are mistaken.

Prevention and healing are human tasks; to do them is to change the things we can change. Justice - the evening of karmic balances - is the business of the Gods, and may take place across a span of many lifetimes. Karmic balance is a thing we cannot change.

### 2) Set Up

You have some decisions to make. The first one is whether you will work alone or ask one or more trusted friends to witness and facilitate your working. Some of us can only let our feelings go in strict privacy. For others, the presence of people who will make sure we don't hurt ourselves or our homes removes a source of inhibition. And sometimes simply being heard is part of the release process.

Next, exactly what kind of symbolic action will release your feelings? Will kicking a throw pillow suffice, or do you need to actually make a poppet? Or just screaming may be enough. If you want to work with a physical symbol, prepare it in advance, and be sure not to use anything you will want to keep after the rite or ever use again.

Figure out whether you can either cast a Circle to include your bathroom, or leave a cast Circle for a period of time. This

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will depend on your particular training. If possible, have a warm scented tub waiting for you. If not, a basin of warm scented water and a washcloth within easy reach just outside of your Circle will suffice. Also, a ritual meal should be prepared and waiting outside of Circle, and this should include something green and growing - I favor sprouts - and something sweet.

Procedure:

- 1) Waning moon is a good time for this Circle, and the Dark of the Moon is even better. Cast the Circle and invoke the Watchers in your usual manner. Call on the Crone, on She who weeds and prunes and disposes of the obstructive and unnecessary.
- 2) Just inside the Circle, like the membrane in an eggshell, cast a grounding shield. One possible image for this shield would be a black absorptive chain link fence, supported at regular intervals by fence posts that are lightning rods. Whatever happens within this space will be contained and grounded.
- 3) Make clear to yourself what wound you seek to drain. Say it out loud, even if you are alone. Recall what happened to you in detail and let the feelings grow strong.
- 4) Now, let go of your feelings. Do whatever will help you release what is in you. Beat on a pillow or rip up a doll. Scream till you cry. Don't stop till you are emptied. Then fling the thing you used as a symbol out of your Circle.
- 5) When you are sure you are all done, all drained, contract the shield into a tight ball in the center of the Circle. As it contracts, it will gather all the negative energy from the Circle. Ground it. Affirm that you are sending this energy to the fire at the heart of the Earth - to Jarnsaxe or to Pele - to be purified in that blast furnace and cycled to wherever strong energy is needed. Know that what you now let go is gone. Affirm this out loud.
- 6) Wash or bathe in a ritual manner, feeling the last traces of your bad feelings dissolve away. If others are present, allow them to wash and serve you.
- 7) Rest a few minutes. Feel the peace of emptiness.
- 8) Then invoke the Maiden's energy for new beginnings. Have your ritual feast, and otherwise indulge your senses. Gentle and joyful music would be effective, and you may want to switch to a sweeter smelling incense. This is a time to dream dreams and plan plans. You have removed an energy drain from your life, now you will be able to ... ?

- 9) Thank and dismiss whatever Beings you have called on, throughout the whole ritual. Close your Circle as usual. Do not do any other kinds of working or worship within this particular Circle.

Follow Through:

The final part of any effective magical working is "acting in accordance" on the material plane. By doing this, we give the magic a channel through which to manifest. For this working, there are three forms of follow through, and all are important.

- 1) Remember that painful feelings are partly habitual. Acting in accordance with magic to banish such feelings requires you to stop feeding the habit. Don't talk about the pain with anybody until at least the second full moon after the working. This gives the habit a chance to fade out. As much as you can, eliminate the topic from your internal dialogue as well. When you notice yourself dwelling on the old pain, gently and firmly change the subject.

Thinking about action to change your life in the here and now is perfectly OK. The problem is reiteration of old feelings of frustration and helplessness that actually impede change.

- 2) If the hurtful situation is current and ongoing, continue with any steps you were taking to change the things you can change. In fact, you will probably find you have more energy than you did before to devote to your projects.
- 3) Be sure to use some of your newly freed emotional energy to reward yourself. Take time for friendship, love, and pleasure. The object of the exercise is to clear space for the enjoyment of life, so start right now.

Judy Harrow  
HPs, Proteus Coven

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LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

Judy writes: "Proteus Coven and Coven Mycota have just adopted each other as "sister covens" a la the Nicaragua/US sister cities program. The people of Mycota are getting together a ritual in which they intend to pledge directly to the Gods that Mycotans do not charge, force, snitch or initiate those who do. We are being very careful however, not to have them pledge these things to me or otherwise set up a lineage situation because Mycota is a group of friends who got together, created their tradition from scratch and trained and initiated each other. On this basis - as a sister, not a daughter, but sharing the same ethical structure, - does anybody object if Mycota considers itself Protean and if the Mycotans see Protean Synthesis?"

Rita here. I don't mind at all if the Mycotans see PS, but then I don't mind if non Proteans see it. I only set up the "secret, for Proteans only" rule because there are other Proteans to whom it matters. I personally don't expect any printed material, including the Gardnerian Book of Shadows, to stay entirely secret.

To the Proteus Family at large:

I would like to start a discussion (here in the pages of Protean Synthesis) about the problems of raising children according to Wiccan values, while trying to avoid contemporary Witch-hunters. To this end, let me first describe my own family situation.

First of all, my husband is not a Witch. He has no interest whatsoever in the Craft, or in any religion at all--I refer to him as a "militant agnostic". He does not seem to disapprove in any way of my Craft activities, and he usually arranges his time so that I have the freedom to participate in coven gatherings. But it's my trip, not his. In addition, he works for a fairly conservative financial institution, and his boss is an Orthodox Jew. So for my husband's sake, the broom closet door has to stay pretty well closed.

Then there is our son, who is almost nine years old. He's fairly bright, and has always displayed naturally Pagan tendencies and a certain amount of psychic ability. I'd love to teach him magick and the Craft openly and proudly. But the kid's got a big mouth, and he'd go around telling everybody "Hey, my mom's a Witch, and she's teaching it to me!" Furthermore, he has behavior problems, and is attending a special school (run by the county) for children with assorted psychological disturbances. He has counseling sessions with various psychologists, psychiatrists, and therapists several times a week, as part of the school program of improving the children's abilities in school. You can well imagine how the counselors would take to hearing about Witchcraft in their nice white-bread suburban school. ("No wonder the poor kid has problems--his mother thinks she's a witch!")

I TELL YOU THREE TIMES I TELL YOU THREE TIMES I TELL YOU THREE TIMES: I do not want anyone sending me suggestions for how to deal with my own personal situation. I hope to start a discussion among members of the Proteus family, through the pages of Protean Synthesis here, about integrating the two kinds of families we belong to; our families in the traditional sense, our parents, kids, Significant Others, nosy aunts, etc., and our families-by-choice, our coven sisters/brothers/ancestors/descendants. I'd also like to discuss amongst ourselves how we teach our children our ways, and how far out of the broom closet we dare to come. (Y'know, the more of us who come out, the easier it is for others to come out...but where do we start?)

Rita, maybe this could become a regular department or column. I know that at least some Proteids face similar situations in their lives, and I hope the discussion will be lively enough not to bore the ones who don't.

Okay, folks, who wants the Talking Stick first?

--Ashta'arArthura

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CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT MUSIC FOR PAGANS  
by Valerie Voigt and Zephyr Starwater  
reprinted from Pagana #22, Samhain '84

Having begun as a review of "Songs of the Goddess" by Cindee Grace, cassette, \$9.00 postpaid from Grace and the Goddess Unlimited, POB 4367, Boulder, Colorado 80306.

This was originally to have been a simple review by Zephyr of Cindee Grace's new cassette, "Songs of the Goddess." When we had listened to the tape, however, Zephyr found himself hard-pressed to formulate a review which could include everything he wanted to say. We found ourselves in a very long discussion of the different factors that need to be weighed in evaluating an artistic work. We will therefore discuss aspects of Pagan music generally, and a number of specific albums and tapes as well.

One problem is choosing a reasonable standard for comparison. On the one hand, there are numerous pieces of professional music which are very Pagan in content --- for example, Sufi Sally Oldfield's "Waterbearer" and "Celebration" albums; Earth, Wind and Fire's albums; and the recordings of Ruth Barrett and Cynthia Smith. All of these feature the high production values one expects of professional music.

On the other hand, there is a valuable kind of music one may call "community music." This is the heart-born music which expresses the values and feelings of a "movement" community --- be it the labor movement, the peace movement, or the Pagan movement. Such music tends to be simple, often featuring prose rather than poetic lyrics. It is also usually fun, lively, and/or easy to sing, so that community members can sing the songs at parties and festivals. Production values are usually amateurish, as one expects when the music is recorded on a ghetto-blaster or a cheap living room tape recorder. Examples of such Pagan community music are Jim Alan and Selena Fox's "Circle Magick Musick," Caliope's Coven's "The Door into Faerie," and most filk music, as well as most Pagan music cassettes sold through newsletters and at festivals.

It would obviously make no sense to blame Caliope's Coven for not being as good as Sally Oldfield; nor to praise Earth, Wind, and Fire for surpassing Jim Alan.

Herein lies the problem of reviewing Cindee Grace's "Songs of the Goddess". One expects it to be "community music quality"; but in fact it clearly aspires to --- and largely meets --- a high professional standard instead. We will therefore discuss it in terms of that much higher standard.

This cassette features songs of several different styles: blues, jazz, and easy listening, but with an overall flavor of light rock. Cindee Grace's musical compositions are sophisticated and very well executed, particularly by Ginny Silcox, who plays piano, flute, guitar, percussion, and synthesizer with great virtuosity, as well as being the sound engineer. The instrumental composition and execution are comparable to those found on, for example, Ancient Future's "Visions of a Peaceful Planet" cassette album.

Ms. Grace's voice is very pure and sweet, but lacks strong diaphragm support. We suspect that this may stem from shyness or tension (not otherwise evident) due to this being her first tape. She'll probably outgrow the tension and learn to let go and "really belt it out" as she gains more experience; meanwhile, her support is nicely even and her voice is perfectly adequate for most of her intended audience.

Her voice exceeds those of Ruth Barrett and Cynthia Smith in its tonal control and purity, but does not show the strength of either; she pushes at the high edge of her vocal range. Perhaps by doing so she will eventually expand her range, but that remains to be seen. Rock singers, like Cindee Grace and Charlie Murphy, often exceed their ranges. Depending on the particular song and listener, this may or not be a problem. Charlie Murphy's uneven diaphragm support is, when strong, good enough to let him get away with it; when weak, insufficient to carry him through. Cindee Grace's support, while not real strong, is unusually consistent. The result is that she almost always gets away with it.

We found Ms. Grace's voice too sweet for the humorous "Pre-Enlightenment Blues" song, which calls for an earthier vocalization. Compared to the rawer style needed

here, Ms. Grace's voice is too light. Again, this problem will probably disappear as she becomes a more seasoned performer and learns to relax more.

We had two problems with the lyrics. They're largely on the prose side, more so than Key Gardner's, Geof Morgan's, or Charlie Murphy's; Ms. Grace is, at least for now, more of a musician than a poet. Secondly, we have some ideological commentary: The intent of the whole production is avowedly Pagan and anti-patriarchal, yet it seems to us that the purpose is to some extent undermined by the intertwined presence of ideas which are born of the Judaeo-Christian dualism which fosters patriarchy. These ideas are common enough among "New Age" type people --- for example, "transcending the ego" (which usually means leaving the ego behind, rather than a reaching-beyond that includes the ego). So-called "ego transcendence" is all-too-often linked with asceticism and denial or denigration of the body; and further with a contempt for "this world" and its allegedly illusionary Nature, in favor of the "spirit world" or "Heaven", which is seen as superior. Usually this scheme of things has God on top, Man below God, Woman and Nature below Man. Thus, the lyrical references to the "New Age", "transcending the ego," "angels," and "perfect lovers" (this last concept being derived from the extreme patriarchy of Platonism) punched our buttons enough to put us off some songs, although the unconscious patriarchal attitudes are clearly not so intended. Some of the songs (such as "Sweet Child of Allah") on Sally Oldfield's "Waterbearer" album do the same thing. On the other side of the fence, Ms. Grace's song "Prayer" and the cassette's leading invocation spoke strongly to both of us.

This cassette and the energy that went into it are obviously a labor of love and devotion to the Goddess. It is musically excellent, and we predict it will be extremely popular.

Partly to help readers choose, and partly to demonstrate our standards for our criticisms, we are including a chart comparing various musical offerings which appeal to Pagans.

Happy Listening!

Note: All recordings in stereo, except for a few "strictly community" ones.

RECORDINGS in no strict order	!pro or !community!	!type	!musical !composition	!instrumental !virtuosity	!vocal !purity	!vocal !strength	!poetic strength !of lyrics	!Pagan !content	!sound !engineering!
Sally Oldfield: "Waterbearer" "Celebration" in stores	!pro ! !	!New-Agey ! !	!excellent !complex !sophisticated	!excellent ! !	!excellent ! !	!very good ! !	!mostly very !good	!medium ! !	!excellent ! !
Key Gardner: "Moonscircles" catalog # WME80, \$7.50 ppd. from Sisterspirit, Box 3045, San Jose, California 95156	!pro ! ! !	!mostly !meditation ! !	!very good, !varied !sophistication!	!very good ! !	!okay ! !	!good ! !	!medium ! !	!high ! !	!excellent ! !
Earth, Wind, and Fire --- various albums, available in record stores	!pro ! !	!jazz/rock/ !disco !	!excellent !complex !sophisticated	!excellent ! !	!excellent ! !	!powerful ! !	!mostly good ! !	!varies ! !	!excellent ! !
Ruth Barrett and Cynthia Smith: "Deepening" \$10; "Aeolus", "Music of the Roll- ing World" \$9/ea (specify LP or cassette) from Aeolus Music, 4111 Lincoln Blvd.#211! Marina Del Ray, CA 90292	!pro ! ! ! ! !	!Celtic !traditional !and similar ! ! !	!excellent !medium !complexity ! ! !	!excellent ! ! ! !	!very good ! ! ! !	!good ! ! ! !	!variable ! ! ! !	!high ! ! ! !	!very good ! ! ! !

RECORDINGS in no strict order	!pro or !community!	!type	!musical !composition	!instrumental !virtuosity	!vocal !purity	!vocal !strength	!poetic strength !of lyrics	!Pagan !content	!sound !engineering!
Cindee Grace: "Songs of the Goddess" \$9 ppd. (cassette) in women's or Pagan stores or from Grace and Goddess Unlimited, POB 4367, Boulder, CO 80306	!both	!mixed !light rock	!excellent !complex !sophisticated	!excellent	!excellent	!light but !consistent!	!weak	!medium: !Goddessy !but New !Agey	!excellent
Alan Stivell: "Renaissance of the Celtic Harp" (cassette) \$11 + \$2 handling from The Mystic Trader, POB 1000, Taos, NM 87571.	!both	!traditional !Celtic	!very good, !varied !complexity and !sophistication!	!very good	!medium	!good	!We don't know !—it's almost !all in Gaelic!?	!In Gaelic!	!good
Alan Stivell: "E Lannonned" (LP) \$11 + \$5 handling for up to 5 records from Lark in the Morning, Box 1176, Mendocino, CA 95460.									
Jethro Tull: "Songs from the Wood", "Heavy Horses" both available in stores.	!pro	!eccentric !rock	!excellent, !complex, !sophisticated	!excellent	!medium	!good	!mostly good	!mostly !high	!excellent
Charlie Murphy: "Catch the Fire" album \$8 ppd from Good Fairy Productions, POB 12188 Broadway Station, Seattle, WA 98102.	!both	!mostly rock	!moderately !complex, good	!good	!medium	!varies	!varies	!high	!good
Holly Tannen: "Invocation" LP or cassette, \$7.95 + \$1.75 handling from Ladyslipper, POB 3130, Durham, NC 27705.	!pro	!mixed !traditional !and similar	!excellent, !medium !complexity	!excellent	!very good !to !excellent!	!strong	!excellent	!high	!excellent
Geof Morgan: "It Comes with the Plumbing" album or cassette, \$8 ppd. from Nexus Records, POB 5881, Bellingham, WA 98227.	!both	!folksy, !mixed	!good, simple	!good	!moderate !to good	!medium	!varies	!compatible !but not !explicit	!good
Gwydion: "Songs of the Old Religion" (tape), "The Faerie Shaman" (tape or LP), \$10 ea. ppd. from Circle, Box 219, Mount Horeb, WI 53572.	!semi-pro	!folksy	!good, simple	!mixed, !usually good! !(better on !FAERIE SH.)	!so-so	!varies	!mostly good	!high	!fair
Caliope's Coven: "The Door into Faerie" cassette, \$7 ppd. from Caliope's Coven, 1212 Bonita, Berkeley, CA 94709.	!community	!folksy	!good, simple	!good	!mixed	!varies, !mostly !weak	!mostly good	!high	!homemade
Jim Alan and Selena Fox: "Circle Magick Musick" cassette, \$9 ppd. from Circle, Box 219, Mount Horeb, WI 53572.	!community	!folksy	!good, simple	!fair	!so-so	!varies, !mostly !weak	!varies	!high	!homemade

RECORDINGS in no strict order	!pro or !community!	!type	!musical !composition	!instrumental !virtuosity	!vocal !purity	!vocal !strength	!poetic strength !of lyrics	!Pagan !content	!sound !engineering!
Average filk tape sold through the mail or traded (this is here for comparison purposes)	!community!	!varies, !usually is !folksy	!so-so, simple	!so-so	!variable, !so-so to !good	!varies, !mostly !weak	!varies, often !weak, sometimes !excellent	!varies	!so-so to !fair
Sylvan Gray: "Ice Flowers Melting" cassette, \$8.95 + \$1.75 handling from Ladyslipper, POB 3130, Durham, NC 27705.	!pro	!meditation	!excellent, !sophisticated	!excellent	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!excellent
Emerald Web: various, including "Whispered Visions" cassette, \$8.98 + \$1 handling from Emerald Web, c/o Bob Stohl and Kat Epple, 58 Roble Rd., Berkeley, CA 94705. Checks payable to Kat Epple.	!pro	!meditation	!excellent, !sophisticated	!excellent	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!excellent
William Ackerman: "Passage" cassette, catalog #T396, \$10 + \$2 handling from The Mystic Trader, POB 1000, Taos, NM 87571.	!pro	!meditation	!excellent, !sophisticated	!excellent	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!excellent
Stephen Halpern and Georgia Kelly: "Ancient Echoes" cassette, catalog #T386, \$9 + \$2 handling from The Mystic Trader, POB 1000, Taos, NM 87571.	!pro	!meditation	!excellent, !sophisticated	!excellent	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!excellent
Ancient Future: "Visions of a Peaceful Planet" cassette, \$8.98 + \$1 handling from Ancient Future, POB 264, Kentfield, CA 94914.	!pro	!meditation	!excellent, !sophisticated	!excellent	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!n/a	!excellent
John Roberts and Tony Berrand: "Dark Ships in the Forest/Songs of the Supernatural" LP \$8.98 ppd. from Folk-Legacy Records, Sharon, CT 06069.	!semi-pro	!traditional !folk	!good, simple	!good, simple	!so-so to !moderate	!good	!mostly good	!mostly !high	!good
Fred Kuhn and Light: "A Song of Gods Gone Mad" LP \$8.50 ppd. from Off-Centaur Productions, POB 424, El Centro, CA 94530.	!community!	!mixed, !light rock	!good, complex	!good	!so-so	!medium	!varies	!high	!fair
Leslie Fish and the Dehorn Crew: "Solar Sailors" LP \$7.50 ppd. from Off-Centaur Productions, see above.	!community!	!mixed	!good, mixed !complexity	!very good	!good	!excellent	!mostly good	!not !explicit	!fair

# LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

Rowen Bell-Nom writes: "I enjoyed Yona's letter in the latest Synthesis (#6). My latest personal work has been on centering on yourself, and Yona's article centers Paganism on itself. The question isn't about right and wrong, but about does it work? If our clergy (which is at least 90% of us) can do what we need, then it doesn't matter if most of us can't do every function required of a one-man clergy (or one "man" per 30 or more people). Of course, we can't expect to get a job as clergy, which others can do, except for a darn few, but living in the world of non-religious work is a growing experience (read: a pain).

Anyway, Yona's viewpoint got some fresh air into an old question. Thanks, Yona!

On a sadder topic, there have been a few deaths in my various communities, mostly suicide. Great sorrow for those who knew them.

I did a simple settling ritual for them, and afterwards, I had a talk with the Lord and Lady about taking care of them. (None of this takes care of the need to grieve.) Here is the settling ritual:

Take an appropriate vessel (ceramic cup, glass bowl, etc, as feels right), fill it with water. Go outside, to tree or brook or stone, whatever has spirit or power to you, to convey your message across, and call on whatever elements, lift the vessel and say to the one who has passed on, "Cycle thou, oh pure spirit in an earthenware bowl, now released", spilling the water on the final word, as a symbol of the spirit that has left the "earthenware bowl" of the body behind. (Spill the water on, in, or at the foot of the tree, brook, or stone that one chose earlier.)

With all reverence, wash the vessel completely in water being re-using, or bury it.

When I was done with this, I felt a need to talk with the Lord and Lady about taking care of them. I didn't have to need to mess with fancy invocations, so I simply waved an arm to each Quarter, and brought a mountain, a tornado, a fire storm, and a tsunami (which stood perched over the proceeding talk, on the brink of breaking, much taller than the house). It was the most intense experience of the elements I've ever had, and it was truly difficult to release them, and see again the house and the yard. The advantage of working solitaire: you know when you've done what you intended, and know when to move on. And you don't have to brief anyone in what will be going on - it's all in the head of the only (mortal) participant....

*A Wonder Book* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

220 pages, paperbound

95¢ in stores or \$1.50 ppd. from

Magnum Classics, 18 East 41st St., Rm. 105

New York, New York 10017

(reprinted from *Pagana* #22 (Samhain '84) reviewed by Valerie Voigt)

Hawthorne wrote these tongue-in-cheek retellings of Greek myths in 1851. Aiming the stories at children, he wrote with an unabashedly Romantic flavor, admitting in his forward that he had used "a great freedom of treatment." He added that he did "not, therefore, plead guilty to a sacrilege" in his re-shaping of the tales, but that he had certainly had a lot of fun writing them. I hope so, since he was at the time resting up from having written, in rapid succession, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables*, which can't have been very spirit-lightening.

*A Wonder Book* is a fun read. Its Victorian Romantic air is dignified but not priggish. Children enjoy these stories, which are ideal for reading to kids at bedtime, or for letting the kids read to you. I recomend it and its sequel, *Tanglewood Tales*, for every Pagan family's bookshelf.

*Jambalaya* by Luisah Teish, ISBN 0-06-250860-1, \$17.95 hardbound, Harper and Row, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, New York 10022.

Canadian edition by Fitzhenry and Whiteside, Ltd., Toronto

Available at Books Incorporated, Town and Country Village, San Jose

(reviewed by Zephyr Starwater, reprinted from *Pagana* #29 (Brigid '86))

*Jambalaya* is a Southern dish, spicy and full of all sorts of things. It is also the title of Luisah Teish's first book. The author is a teacher and lecturer in the San Francisco Bay Area, focussing on the nature of the Afro-diasporic (her own term) nature religions and their relevance to today's needs.

The traditions are known by several names, and the branches with which Teish is most familiar are found in the Southern USA, the Caribbean, South America, and just about every major city in the western hemisphere. Teish calls them "Afro-diasporic" because their sources are primarily the nature religions of the Africans who were brought to America as slaves. These people found similar beliefs and practices among some of the Native Americans they encountered, and incorporated some of their ways. They also incorporated elements from Roman Catholicism--firstly, because they were forbidden to retain African beliefs and practices, and had to maintain their worship in secret behind a mask of Catholicism; and secondly, because the Catholic reverence for saints appeared to them to be akin to their own reverence for the ancestors. These somewhat syncretised practices became "Macumba and Candomble in Brazil, Lucumi in Cuba, Santeria in Puerto Rico, and Voudou or Hoodoo in Haiti and New Orleans." (pp 105-108)

*Jambalaya* is written mainly for women, but the information is valuable to people of any gender. It is a conversational, anecdotal journey, including descriptions of Teish's background in the New Orleans environment of whispered secrets, her return pilgrimage later in life to find Voudou practitioners, the origins of the Afro-diasporic traditions in west Africa, theology and metaphysics, the nature and practice of ancestor reverence, and some of the history of New Orleans Voudou, featuring the famous Marie LaVeau. The discussion of ancestor worship is especially valuable, and Teish does reasonably well at putting it in terms understandable to those whose backgrounds are more mainstream.

Interspersed throughout are the rituals promised by the book's subtitle: "The Natural Woman's Book of Personal Charms and Practical Rituals." Here are step-by-step instructions for safe, ethical magical practice. I found her advice on candle magic particularly useful and very carefully detailed. She gives rituals for purification, healing, spirit communication, finding love relationships, getting a job, honoring one's ancestors and asking their aid, and also for working with the seven best known of the west African Yoruba deities. She also gives lists of ingredients for oils and incenses.

In her final chapter, Teish discusses the importance of overcoming racism and ethnocentrism among today's growing spiritual communities, particularly the women's communities to which *Jambalaya* is primarily addressed. She discusses altar circles (circles of spiritual workers), their leadership and general functioning, and some of the frequently encountered pitfalls. She also addresses the meeting of magical workers of different cultures, what they may have to learn from each other, and some problems in mutual understanding that may arise.

Luisah Teish has a powerful writing style, a gift for storytelling, and some cogent messages. I highly recommend *Jambalaya* for those interested in the Afro-diasporic ways, in the meeting of cultures and magical paths, in the raising of ecumenical, racial, and ethnic consciousnesses, and in the life of one of the very few priestesses of these ways to be willing to communicate about them with the world of non-initiates. Read, learn, enjoy.

PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE PAGAN PARENTS, "P.A.P.P."  
by Connie Healy

Yes, we are expecting. I'm not pregnant, nor is my partner, Barbara. A pregnant woman down South or maybe even somewhere else would be the mother who delivers our child. We are on the "biracial list" of an attorney intermediary who does adoptions as a sideline. I've been conversing with the attorney's wife, a friendly sort of woman, who keeps me alert to the circumstances of her latest crop of clients. Adoption is a little "iffy" because at the last minute, after the delivery, the mother could decide not to sign the surrender for the child to be adopted. In some states, like New York, she's got forty-five days to change her mind even after she signs.

What about the father's rights? These attorneys advertise in the paper if necessary as the law says they must even if the father is not locatable.

Money? This goes according to color. Since we're not trying to adopt a "white" child it's cheaper, about \$5,000 cheaper.

Why go through all this? In my case certain problems of infertility leave Petri-dish child-bearing or adoption as the main routs toward parenting. We chose adoption because it has a higher success rate than in-vitro fertilization and probably is less expensive. And Barbara too, is not able to conceive without the Petri-dish method, etc., etc.

What does any of this have to do with Paganism, or Proteans? We're glad to announce that Proteus Coven welcomes our expected offspring to all its rituals and gatherings. We feel very happy and fortunate to start our family together with our Protean family. I think the child will teach us a lot about what it means to be an "eclectic" Pagan.

In the meantime, back at the ranch, the attorney's wife says "We'll have something for you by July, but if something pops up(out?) sooner, I'll give you a call."

I must apologize for the lateness of this issue. Perhaps I can excuse myself by mentioning the ambitious large size of this (overambitious. I intended it to be 2 pages longer). Perhaps by mentioning job stress that has me coming home from work and spending almost all of almost every evening in a hot bathtub with a trashy novel. Or maybe I should admit that I went to the movies this weekend.

PTH

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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FROM THE EDITOR

This is the Lammas '88 ish. I anticipate that nextish will be the Harvest, I mean Mabon, '88 ish, but that depends on you folks sending me material. I understand summer slump -- I myself am behind on ALL my writing, even answering letters -- but the only people who sent me stuff for thish are Ashta'ar sent me a poem that she wrote, Judy sent me a clipping from the NEW YORK TIMES, Valerie sent me a while back a bunch of stuff that she'd written for PAGANA, for me to reprint at will. And there are a couple of essays I wrote which were recovered after the crash of the hard disk on which they were residing. I need to thank Ashta'ar, Judy, Valerie, my friend who lets me use her computer, and Bunker-Ramo (the company with which she has the service contract on the hardware). I also need to thank my roommate, Orion Peridot, who does half the work on this publication. He retypes the Valerie articles (because I don't want to publish them as multi-generational xeroxes) on his horrible pseudo PC clone (sub PC clone) that I scorn to use.

Switching into gossip column mode, early in July I got a personal letter which mentioned that Connie and Barbara's baby had arrived, is named Dorian, had attended three Circles of Proteus Coven already, and is cute. I also saw an announcement in PAGANA that Valerie Voigt and Zephyr Starwater are enjoying their handparting. PS welcomes announcements of new babies, new homes, handpartings, handfastings, etc.

Switching into editorial column mode, I wish to protest the word "empowerment". It used to be a perfectly good word, but now it has been ruined by mis-use. Currently, "empowering people" means "forcing people to do what I want them to do". I first realised this when I read an article in a recent PSYCH TODAY about how modern college students are not politically active. People my age (30) need to be reminded from time to time that modern college students aren't political, but that writer was a wart. He praised one student for participating in a world disarmament organization, but condemned him for volunteering at a soup kitchen. He said that the student was disempowering himself by an obsession with local issues leading him to waste time feeding the starving that could have been spent working for world peace.

Next I read an article by a Birthright 'counsellor' who claims that her job is empowerment, giving women the power to keep their babies. If true, that would be good thing, but her way of empowering her clients appears to be screaming at them that they're baby murderers and phoney feminists until they break down, then giving them a lot of lies about how the Welfare will pay for nice food and shelter and medical care for child and mother.

I am old-fashioned, but to me it is obvious that one doesn't give people power over their own lives by threatening them or telling them lies, and it is obvious to me that people who have power over their own lives have the power to have different priorities, even different values, than those who judge them. Specifically, the power to feed the starving, thus giving them a chance to live to benefit by world peace.

## Stella Maris

Our Lady Star of the Sea,  
You sing in the surf's sound,  
you sing inside seashells;  
starfish and sand-dollars show your sign.

All life began in the sea;  
simple single-celled organisms,  
shellfish, swimming fish,  
creatures that crawled onto the land;  
and our blood is salty as sea-water.

We sail over the sea in ships,  
we swim, we dive deep,  
our submarines seek the secret abyss;  
but still we have much to learn.

We fish your waters endlessly;  
we kill your children,  
whales and dolphins our cousins;  
we pour out our poisons;  
and still you endure.

Stella Maris, mermaid goddess,  
Aphrodite, born of sea-foam,  
Tiamat, Yemaya, we call you,  
Our Lady Star of the Sea.

--Ashta'arArthura

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New York Times 2/19/82

## Margot Adler and John Gliedman Wed

Margot Susanna Adler and John Lowell Gliedman were married yesterday at the Lambert's Cove Inn in West Tisbury, Mass. Selena Fox, a minister of the Circle Sanctuary, performed the ceremony.

The bride, who will retain her name, is a reporter with "All Things Considered," and "Morning Edition," both on National Public Radio, and is the author of "Drawing Down the Moon," a study of modern neo-paganism and goddess religions published by the Beacon Press. The bridegroom, a psychologist and science writer, is a co-author of a report for the Carnegie Council on Children called "The Unexpected Minority: Handicapped Children in America."

Ms. Adler is the daughter of Dr. Kurt Alfred Adler, a psychiatrist in New York, and the late Freyda

Nacque Adler. She is a granddaughter of the late Alfred Adler, a psychiatrist, of Vienna and New York. She graduated from the City and Country School, the High School of Music and Art, and the University of California at Berkeley, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. The bride received a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University in 1982.

Mr. Gliedman, the son of the late Dr. and Mrs. Lester H. Gliedman of Lutherville, Md., graduated from the Park School and magna cum laude from Harvard University. He received a Ph.D. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His previous marriage ended in divorce. His father was a psychiatrist.

Book Reviews by Valerie Voigt  
reprinted from Pagana #32, Beltane '86

*Macumba* by Serge Bramly, ISBN # 0-380-42317-0, 224 pages, paperbound, black and white photographs, \$2.25. Avon Books, div. of the Hearst Corporation, 959, 8th Avenue, New York, New York.

This book provides an overview of Macumba, the highly syncretistic Afro-Brazilian Pagan magical religion practiced throughout Latin America. Most of the book consists of excerpts from the author's conversations with Maria-Jose, who is Mae de Santo (High Priestess, more or less) of a terreiro (Macumba religious house) in Rio de Janeiro. One valuable result of this "edited conversation" writing style is that the author's rationalistic Western "psychological" attitude toward magic and religion is contrasted dramatically with Maria-Jose's holistic Pagan theological attitude toward her practices.

The book includes a discussion of each of the major orixas (divinities), and a general (not detailed enough for use) description of some of the practices of the religion. Although the author does not mention the fact, certain key material has been omitted (and rightly so). The material presented is generally consistent with related Afro-Caribbean religions (for example, Santeria), and accurate.

Many of Macumba's basic attitudes, as brought out in this book, parallel (or even are identical with) corresponding Euro-American Pagan attitudes. Craft Elders, in particular, will here find much that is familiar. This is no surprise, of course, since both Macumba and Wicca are empirical magical religions. Euro-American Paganism does not, of course, include animal sacrifice as Macumba often does; but in other regards the two religions have much in common. Maria-Jose's thoughts on the inherently eclectic nature of most magical religions are interesting.

Some of the photographs are good; others are dim, fuzzy, or otherwise unhelpful.

This book is a nice introduction to some of the basic ideas common to most Pagan religions, as well as presenting a decent short overview of its subject. I especially recommend it for persons interested in learning about the history of African religious traditions in the New World.

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reprinted from Pagana #36, Samhain '86

SHORT TAKES ON BOOKS FOR KIDS

*I am a Farmer* by Dick Swayne and Peter Savage; ISBN #0-397-31776-X. Ages 1-8. J.B. Lippincott company, 1978.

Farmer Sue shows you around her farm and introduces her friends, the animals, as she does her chores. Nice photographs, lots of stuff for your toddler or preschooler to ask you about.

*A Little Book of Numbers*, Chubby Board Book. ISBN #0-671-41346-5. For toddlers. Zokeisha, Tokyo/New York; Simon and Schuster, 1980. \$2.95.

Numbers from 1 to 10, illustrated with simple, bright paintings of fruits and vegetables. Not much for the kids to comment on.

*Chubby Bear Goes to the Moon*, Chubby Board Book, ISBN #0-671-50953-5. For toddlers. Zokeisha, Tokyo/New York; Simon and Schuster, 1984. \$2.95.

In his fantasies, Chubby Bear is an astronaut. The bright watercolor illustrations contain enough detail to spark comments from your toddler.

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*Animal Homes*, by E.K. Davis, ISBN #0-307-10132-0 and 0-307-68132-7 (library bound).  
Ages 1-8. Golden Book, New York: 1982.

This is a nice little book showing well-illustrated animals in their natural habitats. This is a favorite of Elana (22 months). It has very pleasing painting illustrations. A possible drawback is on the last page: "Puppies and kittens live in houses with people like you." Those who are allergic to animal hair, or otherwise feel that such animals are "outside pets", may disagree.

*The Playground*, by Harold Roth. ISBN #0-448-106760-0. Ages 0-4. A Babies Love Photo Board Book, Grosset and Dunlap: 1986. \$2.50.

Babies who are in the avid-photograph-examining stage (around 1-2 years old) like this one. The text is simple, the photos candid but clear. Multiracial.

*The Real Mother Goose*, ISBN #528-82436-8 (?). Red Husky Book: Rand McNalley and Company, third printing: 1984.

The lovely classic illustrations by Blanche Fisher Wright complement a selection of traditional rhymes. Some parents may, as I do, object to one: "The Little Girl with the Curl (in the Middle of her Forehead)." Like Elana's Episcopalian grandmother and great-grandmother, I am firmly convinced in my theological position that no child of nursery-rhyme age can possibly be bad. Hard to live with sometimes, yes, but not bad. When we read this book, I skip this rhyme.

*The Real Mother Goose*, ISBN #528-82324-4 (?). Blue Husky Book: Rand McNalley and Company, sixth printing: 1984.

Another volume of the above. I skip "Rock-a-bye-Baby" in this one. Some may also prefer to skip "Little Polly Flanders", in which Polly's mother "whipped her little daughter."

Incidentally: like the other volume, this one has only Caucasian characters.

*Frog and Toad are Friends*, by Arnold Lobel. ISBN #0-06-023957-3. Ages 1 and up. Listed as ages 4-8, but Elana (22 months) and Thea (29 months) love it. Harper and Row, 1970.

This book deserves the awards it has won (Caldecott and National Book Award). It presents a touching and entertaining picture of friendship.

*A House is a House for Me*, by Mary Ane Hoberman, illustrated by Betty Fraser. Ages 1-8. ISBN #0-670-38016-4. Oversized. Viking Press, New York: 1978. \$13.95.

This charming rhyming book examines houses, shelters, and containers. Both the words and the pictures are imaginative and attractive, the cast multiracial. The highly-detailed pictures often contain small visual jokes. The last line in the book is, "And the earth is a house for us all."

*Our Animal Friends at Maple Hill Farm*, by Alice and Martin Provinsen. Ages 1 and up. ISBN #0-394-82123-8. Oversized. Random House, New York: 1974. No Price listed.

Through words and paintings, this book introduces the animals on the authors' real-life farm in New York State. The animals emerge as full personalities.

One thing I especially like about this book is its lack of saccharine. One of the cats, Max, "leaves gifts of...chipmunk heads on the doorstep. Not a pretty sight.... But, then, no cats are vegetarians. It's not in their nature." Not that there is any particular emphasis on such facts of natural life; but there's no avoidance either. Nature is presented more fully and honestly than in most books for children.

This is one of Elana's favorites. One of mine, too.

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Catch Me and Kiss Me and Say it Again, by Clyde Watson; illustrated by Wendy Watson.  
ISBN #0-399-20954-7; ages 0 and up. Philomel  
Books, New York: 1978. \$5.95.

This delightful book of nursery rhymes sounds and feels traditional, although all the rhymes are new. The atmosphere is familiar and homey, the tone fond and humorous.

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#### SOME BOOKS I WON'T GET MY DAUGHTER FOR YULE

As a conscientious parent, I try to find my child books which not only are fun, but will help her develop healthy attitudes and perspectives with a minimum of harmful baggage---especially patriarchal, racist, consumptionist, anti-Nature, or narrow Judaeo-Christian baggage.

Hence, I offer the following comments on some books I was unfortunate enough to buy without reading them first. Impressionable children, especially toddlers, are very open and have no defence, except their parents' caring judgement, against cultural garbage.

*A Little ABC Book*, Chubby Board Book, ISBN #0-671-41342-2, for toddlers. A Wanderer book, published by Simon and Schuster.

This book has very pretty pictures, but it has several items I don't want programmed into my child's subconscious:

"D is for Doctor who makes everyone well" exclusively supports a worshipful attitude toward the conservative medical establishment while ignoring other healers entirely. Incidentally, the doctor--like all other characters in the book--is male.

"I is for Indians, dancing and prancing." Yuck! Stereotype Hollywood "wild Indian" here. I'd be surprised that Native Americans hadn't complained, if I weren't aware that they have many more urgent concerns.

The "L" entry has a misspelling, but that's the least of my concerns.

Remembering my own love (past and present) for Walt Disney's movies and books, I enrolled Elana in the Disney Book Club, which turned out to be a mistake.

*Cinderella*, book club edition, ISBN #0-394-82552-7 and 0-394-92552-1; ages 1-7. No. 16 in "Disney's Wonderful World of Reading." Random House, 1974.

This way-too-oversimplified retelling of the old French folk tale is set in the Victorian period. The "good" characters are all saccharine, and the "evil" ones are too petty to be convincing even in a folk tale context. It is notable that the original French tale I know features a tree growing on the grave of Cinderella's mother, who advises Cinderella--who is a cardinal, strong character active in deciding events in her own life, in contrast to the Disney Cinderella, who is a passive, static character with neither initiative nor power. The Haitian version of the French tale, likewise, features a spunky character who speaks to her egun mother through an orange tree. Shades (pardon the pun) of Joan of Arc!

From this Disney version a child is likely to conclude that:

Good and evil are absolutes.

People who look like a toothpaste commercial are good.

People who do not look like a toothpaste commercial are evil...unless, of course, they are too old to be pretty, in which case they're just comical.

Girls should be passive (or even masochistic), accepting whatever fate other people give them. If they suffer enough, a handsome prince will rescue them...and they'll live happily ever after.

Bambi Grows Up, book club edition, ISBN #0-394-84235-9 and 0-394-94235-3; Random House, 1979. Danish edition: Bambi Vokser Op.

My main problem with this book is that the climax of the book is as follows:

"But Faline (Bambi's girlfriend) had met another young buck.

"Hi, Bambi," she said. "This is Ronno."

"Bambi was furious.

"Why was this strange deer in HIS (emphasis in original) part of the forest?...."

Bambi and Ronno fight, Bambi winning and taking the young doe Faline as his prize. Bambi's father

"stared at Bambi with admiring eyes.

"The young prince had proved himself a brave son.

"Bambi had grown up."

Now, I am aware that in Nature, stags fight each other. I have no problem with that. The catch is that these animal characters are so heavily anthropomorphized that they clearly represent, and reinforce, human beings and cultural attitudes.

Old stags do not, with parental pride, watch their sons defeat other stags. It is human beings so steeped in violence that they have no other way of handling conflicts who admire such behavior. This book reinforces and even actively encourages that unhealthy attitude.

Both of these Disney books are colorful. The Bambi book is visually beautiful. Unfortunately, I cannot like either book.

Children, especially young children, absorb images and ideas, verbal and nonverbal, from books as well as from elsewhere. Every book teaches a child a great deal, intentionally or not. This process cannot be stopped, and should not be ignored or treated lightly.

We can choose to feed our children harmful messages, or we can choose to feed them healthy ones. The choice is ours, and the responsibility is ours whether we acknowledge it or not.

For this reason I hope that 1) Walt Disney Productions will see the gigantic impact their materials have on children and therefore, ultimately, on modern culture; and that 2) they will re-assess some of their materials and be more deliberate about presenting healthier images and messages whose overall impact will help create a healthier, happier society. Certainly, such was Old Walt's intent.

### Some Observations on the Current Situation of the Country by Orion Peridot

(not to be taken entirely seriously)

Rita has talked me into writing something for PS, so here goes nothing.

The other night while Rita was wondering aloud as to what she was going to put in the Harvest issue, I observed that if the Old Religion were still being practiced by most of the people, this year's Harvest would be a time of lamentation because of the drought.

I then further observed that they would be calling for the sacrifice of a year king so that next year's crop wouldn't also fail. This led to my speculation that "Tecumseh's Curse" was a way of enforcing the unknowing sacrifice of a 20 year king and that it's been deflected from Reagan by the same "Teflon" that keeps all other harm from attaching to him, and that that is the reason for the drought now.

(Rita notes that an astrologer we know says that it isn't an In dian curse, it's a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in some sign every twenty years, and now Saturn has moved enough that they conjoin in a different sign.)

# TRANCE, RELAXATION, ADVENTURE

(I wrote this article for a recent issue of CIRCLE NETWORK NEWS which had a Readers' Forum on "TRANCE". They published it. I am quite proud of myself when my work is published in a Big Name Publication.)

Many books define a "trance" as an "altered state of consciousness". Of course, there are many possible different altered states of consciousness. For a person who is ordinarily tense and busy (as so many people are), simple physical relaxation is a distinct altered state of consciousness. In fact, physical relaxation is a very important altered state. It's good for your health: some people take relaxation training simply to avoid heart disease and other stress diseases. It also feels wonderful: temporary physical relaxation is the major pleasure offered by some of the commonly abused drugs.

Furthermore, relaxation is a prerequisite for some of the other altered states Witches are often interested in, such as the state called "guided meditation" or "guided fantasy" or "pathworking", and the psychically open and receptive state used for scrying and other forms of divination.

Conveniently, these other altered states help relaxation as much as they are helped by relaxation. Exercises to improve visualization or concentration improve relaxation as a side effect. For example, there is a traditional technique of meditating by concentrating on repeating a simple mantra, such as "OM" (or "Jesus", in Western culture), or by concentrating on being fully aware of one's breathing, or by concentrating on a religious picture. Mystics in all the religions of the world invented these techniques for spiritual reasons; modern Americans practise them on a physician's advice as a means of lowering their blood pressure. In fact, the first scientific study of Transcendental Meditation was titled: "The Relaxation Response".

However, not all altered states involve relaxation. For a person who is ordinarily reasonably calm and stable, paranoid fear and phobic terror are altered states. In fact, just because a state of consciousness is altered doesn't mean that it's good or useful.

One trance technique which I consider to be good and useful is guided fantasy, mentioned above. This is a special form of what is commonly called "visualization". Confusingly, visualization includes not only vision, but sound and smell and taste and touch and movement and emotion. Sometimes I say "constructed perception" instead, but that phrase also confuses people. Anyway, no one should say they can't visualize just because they can't make pictures in their heads. If you can taste a ripe juicy strawberry, or feel the touch of your lover's hand, or hear fingernails on a blackboard, you are "visualizing".

If you can't visualize, you can learn how. When I first joined a coven's study group, I couldn't visualize, so I practised and practised. The technique which I found most helpful is what Neuro-Linguistic Programming calls "overlap", in which you start in one sensory mode and "overlap" into other modes. But I didn't find it effective by intellectualizing, I found it effective by doing an exercise from THE SPIRAL DANCE by Starhawk, the exercise called "The Apple".

Imagine a ripe, tasty apple (or another food, if you don't like apples). Hold it your (mind's) hand. Feel its weight, its smooth texture, its coldness from the refrigerator. Look at it, and see its red color with darker speckles, its interestingly curved shape, its funny little brown stem. Lift it to your mouth and feel the muscles move in your arm. Feel its texture and coldness against your lips, smell its perfume. Bite into it! Feel the movement of your jaws, the work done by your teeth, hear the crunch, and taste the juice.

Some radio advertisers are experts at leading even the least imaginative people into this type of experience. There was a famous radio ad that turned Lake Erie into a hot fudge sundae, with no tools but a few sound effects. A couple of years ago, some less famous ads for some brand of videotape or film proclaimed: "We project our images on the only screen good enough for them: your mind."

If the image that you, guided by suggestive words, project on the screen of your

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mind is not just a simple feast or erotic interlude, but a rather detailed narrative, such as once around the wheel of the seasons in a particular natural place, it's called a "guided fantasy" or "pathworking".

Pathworking is a tremendously useful ritual technique. With pathworking, you can do things that you can't do in ritual theater, such as actually turning into a tree for a while and experiencing what a tree experiences. With pathworking, you can also do things that you can do with ritual theater, such as watch Persephone's descent to the Underworld, Demeter's search for her, and their joyful reunion.

This is not just storytelling (a useful technique in its own right). The participants use their trance state to actually experience witnessing the events. And it has a lot of advantages over actually casting actors to act the story. It can be hard to find coveners who can act, who are the right physical type for the part, who have time to rehearse. It can be hard, and expensive, to make costumes and props and scenery. And even after you go to all that work, the audience is still merely audience rather than participants.

Pathworking can be extremely participative. For example, it's common to do a pathworking of going into a cave or under the sea or up to the sky or wherever to converse with a Wise Old Man or Wise Old Woman or Aphrodite or Thunderbird or whoever. Each participant has a separate, solitary, conversation with the deity, asking his/her own private questions and getting his/her own private answers.

Even more participative is a group trip somewhere. The leader only starts, by reciting the trance induction used by the group. After that, all the people lead, by each person saying what they see. One person: "I see a beautiful green meadow". Another person: "I see it, too, and there's a creek running through it." Yet another person: "And there's a rowboat on the creek. Let's get into it and float downstream."

#### Sex-Role Stereotypes in Wicca

(I wrote this article because of a Pallas Society News call for articles on The Role of Men in Wicca.)

I believe that one Witch may have different role than another, because their individual different skills (music, divination, organization), different interests (historical research, healing, political activism), different training. I believe that the difference between one Witch's role and another's is no more based on gender than on race.

Many Witches disagree with me. At one extreme, some Traditions hold that magick energy can only flow between a male who is the positive electric pole and a female who is the negative electric pole, so a single-sex group or a solitary Witch can do no magick and little worship. While magick energy can indeed flow between a male who acts as positive electric pole and female who acts as negative electric pole (and it flows especially strongly if the two are heterosexuals who are attracted to each other), my experience has demonstrated that magick energy can flow just as strongly between two or three or four women who are good friends (even if they are heterosexuals whose love for each other is not erotic). I see no reason why men cannot work together the same way.

At another extreme, some feminist separatist Traditions believe that men are inherently domineering and violent and lacking in intuition and spirituality and therefore incapable of participating in Witchcraft. It is true that in my life I have met some men who were rotten people, but I have also met men who were talented and loving Witches. Individuals differ, one from another. I prefer the theory that all-female covens, and all-male covens, are more intimate than co-ed covens because the coveners have more experiences in common. The meetings of my co-ed coven when all the men coincidentally phoned in sick or were out of town on business trips, were especially intimate, so I was dreadfully disappointed when I visited one all-female coven and found that it was just like my co-ed coven (when the men were there).

In between these two extremes, many people are saying: "Of course women and men can be Witches, separately or together, but still they're different." My opinion is that the great bulk of the differences between men as a group and women as a group

are either cultural, resulting from the way children are raised, or imaginary. Speaking of imaginary differences, I have been told that because I'm a woman proves that I'm too shy to speak up in meetings where there are men. This would come as news to my boss and colleagues at work! The modern women with a professional career has the same experience and attitude of competition as a traditional man; the modern single mother has the responsibility of being a breadwinner - a responsibility that Maslow, in an appendix to RELIGIONS, VALUES, AND PEAK EXPERIENCES, claimed was inherently male.

There may well be some biological differences psychologically, as there are physically, between men and women, but it is hard to believe that these differences are as big as the differences between one woman and another. Review GODDESSES IN EVERYWOMAN (by Jean Shinoda Bolen) for a remainder of how different different women can be. I believe that different men can be equally different.

I feel that part of people's inability to look at the human being in front of them and see that human being instead of seeing some stereotype of "typical man" or "typical woman" is because people persist in modelling the polarity of the universe as male-female.

The polarity of the universe is quite obvious: it's light-dark, hot-cold, day-night, summer-winter, empty-full, active-passive, alive-dead, violent-nurturing. (And you will notice that each of those pairs of "opposites" are points on a scale, like hot and cold are both on the thermometer.) Trying to call those polarities male and female leads to confusion. One example is when I heard Dr. Toni Grant, a psychologist with a radio call-in show, tell a woman caller: "People think motherhood is womanly. It's not. Being a mother requires all your masculinity. You have to make rules, set limits, discipline your child and protect your child: all masculine activities." Another example is in the otherwise excellent DESCENT TO THE GODDESS by Jungian analyst Sylvia Brinton Pererra. She writes of Inanna "Her receptivity was active." Translated from Jungian into English, that means "Her female sexuality was male." Pererra was trying to say that Inanna's female sexuality was active, but the symbolism was female-receptive, male-active entangled her.

Quoting bad examples reminds me of ANDROGYNY by June Singer, a book which started out excellent. Then she spent far too long talking about Kabala, and when she finished talking about Kabala, she made some very silly statements. One was a case history of a professional woman who had married a series of weak, dependent, unemployed men. After her last divorce, she became a lesbian and settled down with a woman who dominated her. Singer said that this woman was homosexual when she married weak men and heterosexual when living with a dominant woman, apparently using "homosexual" to mean "against sex-role stereotype" and "heterosexual" to mean "in accordance with sex-role stereotype".

People can also become entangled in sex-role stereotypes when speaking of Gods and Goddesses. I've heard Witches proclaim that the God is all the active and aggressive forces of the universe; the Goddess is all the passive and nurturing forces. They forget the point Dr. Grant was trying to make: that nurturing involves active activity. A mother who just sits there passively doesn't do a whole lot of nurturing.

Then they claim that the Goddess gives life, and the God takes like...and Hecate, Kali, and the Morrigan knock at the door. They claim that the Sun is male ...like Amaratsu, Sunna, and Griane. In fact, any natural phenomenon can be personified as either male or female. My example is: I was writing a Samhain ritual, about the change from Summer to Winter, and I was quite unable to decide which is male and which is female.

For one option, Summer is the fertile growing season, and Winter is barren. For another option, Summer is Sunny and active, and Winter is Lunar (long nights) and sits still and quiet like a blanket of snow. My own private inclination was to make Summer male because Summer is attractive, and I am a heterosexual woman.

I gave up. I wrote a Samhain ritual where the Summer Goddess passed the wand to the Winter Goddess, and latter on I wrote a Beltane ritual where the Winter God passed the scepter to the Summer God. No longer distracted by the incidental difference of the gender of the symbols, I was able to concentrate on the real differences between Summer and Winter.

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A Protean Family Newsletter  
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Hello, everybody. Welcome to the Harvest '88 ish of PS. Particular welcome to Coven Mycota, our new sister. The votes were two in favor and zero opposed. The Mycotans have started right, by giving material to PS (See within). I encourage them to continue, and all the rest of you to follow their example.

LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS  
from Dana Morgan

"Contrary to popular mythology, at least here in GR there is NO such thing as a summer slowdown!

Over the summer, I have: taken 12 units at school, gotten my business settled into a retail location, gotten a mail-order catalog together (and to the printer soon), added 2 new members to the coven, and, even as I write, we're working on a custody situation ....trying to get custody of a second stepson. And presumably the last....3 Grossetts and 2 Morgans makes a full house!

Went North, honeymooning, over 4th of July weekend. My hubby took me to Paradise...literally! Little town in the Upper Peninsula. It gets beautiful North of here...Mich. has lotsa trees everywhere, but it's entirely old forests, more so the North-er you get. Lake Superior is always icy-cold, but agate hunting was fun, and we went Petoskey-ing at Petoskey. Had a wonderful, wild time, just the two of us. Camping out of the back of the truck means you can skip the KoA and other tourist traps and really see the country. It was great!

At any rate, some thoughts to share:  
\*) Mycota receiving PS: Why not? If they're cousins, they're cousins. I was

made welcome, sight unseen (by anyone by Judy + JP). So why not?

\*) Ashta'ar and the kids column: My perception is that very few Proteans are also parents, so why burden the newsletter with our kids' foibles? Part 2 is: especially when there are already several zines devoted to the issues of Pagan parenting.

\*) And part 3 is a general bitch. IF we set up a situation, whether it be unable to teach our kids our religion or to come out to our parents or to get to the Circle, THEN the responsibility for these choices is totally and exclusively our own, and the natural consequences thereof are not suitable subjects for whining. If you don't like the consequences, CHANGE THE CHOICES!

Rita here. I am amazed at how utterly busy Dana<sup>is</sup> and how much she gets done. What is Petoskey? I guess Dana's letter makes THREE votes for admitting Mycota.

I think that any Craft oriented material written by a Protean is appropriate for PS (unless it's libellous or boring or something). I think that Pagan Parenting material in particular adds diversity to our topic mix. And I was interested in Ashta'ar's letter because, tho' not a parent, I am an offspring.

This is probably as good a time as any to mention that I have no suggestions to make for the problem of how to deal with relatives who can't cope with one being in the Craft. First, I don't have relatives who can't cope with me being in the Craft. Most of my relatives are Unitarians or secular Jews. Some of them think all religions are equally valid. Some think all religions are equally invalid. Some seem to think that "Witch" is just a new-fangled word for "hippy".

Continued on page 8

2.

Mycotan Dedication Ritual  
(incorporating Protean ethical principals)

[Note: When the Priest(ess) says "Go to the North (or East, etc.)," the Dedicant goes to that quarter and kneels (if possible).]

Priest(ess): Go to the North.

The first vow is the vow of Silence.  
This is the vow to keep silent about what must not be spoken of;  
to keep others' secrets as your own;  
to keep the confidentiality of the circle.  
Call the Powers of the North to witness your vow.

Dedicant: In the Presence of the Goddess and God, I call upon the Powers of the North to witness my vow of Silence!

[Priest(ess) touches Dedicant's tongue with salt.]

Priest(ess): Go to the East.

The second vow is the vow of Knowledge.  
This is the vow to have Knowledge of what you teach, and to whom you teach it;  
to Know that those you teach will use their Knowledge ethically.  
How can you Know these things?  
You must swear them to the same oaths to which you are now being sworn;  
You must Know them well enough to have reason to trust their oaths.  
Call the Powers of the East to witness your vow.

Dedicant: In the Presence of the Goddess and God, I call upon the Powers of the East to witness my vow of Knowledge!

[Priest(ess) smudges Dedicant with incense.]

Priest(ess): Go to the South.

The third vow is the vow of Will.  
This is the vow to include the Will of any person whom your magic affects in the magic itself.  
How can this be done?  
For the small magics, or for those that stand in a place, you will include a provision in the magic for it to be null unless it shall be accepted and activated by the true Will of its subject;  
for specific spells and Workings even on a person's behalf, you must have that person's express consent in language.  
You will do no magic that is baneful, coercive, or manipulative.  
Call the Powers of the South to witness your vow.

Dedicant: In the Presence of the Goddess and God, I call upon the Powers of the South to witness my vow of Will!

[Priest(ess) passes Dedicant's finger through candle flame.]

Priest(ess): Go to the West.

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The fourth vow is the vow of Love.  
This is the vow to be sure that all your acts which flow from  
the Craft will be done for Love alone;  
for Love, and never for money;  
for Love, and never in barter for goods;  
for Love, and never in barter for services;  
for the Love which forms a bond between people, and to spread  
Love in the World.  
Call the Powers of the West to witness your vow.

Dedicant: In the Presence of the Goddess and God, I call upon the Powers  
of the West to witness my vow of Love!

[Priest(ess) sprinkles water on Dedicant's head.]

Priest(ess): Stand in the Center.

You stand in the Center, which is the place of Spirit, and the  
place of Choice. Have you freely chosen to take these vows?

Dedicant: I have.

Priest(ess): Then I declare, to the Goddess, and to the God, and to the  
powers of all the directions, that (Dedicant's craft name) is  
a Dedicant of coven Mycota!

## LETTER TO PROTEAN SYNTHESIS

Dear Rita et al:

I decided to write this while I was typing Valerie Voigt's book reviews for  
last ish and Rita mentioned that there were some other things I might want to  
comment on so I'm reading the entire mailing. I don't usually.

I think that the Mother Goose Rhyme:

"There was a little girl, who had a little curl

"Right in the middle of her forehead.

"When she was good, she was very very good

"But when she was bad, she was horrid."

refers to the girl being disobedient when it talks about her being "bad" rather than  
about her being evil and many children that age are disobedient and when they are  
they can be "horrid". It's not particularly surprising that Mother Goose Rhymes  
should have only Caucasian characters. There weren't a lot of non Caucasians around  
Europe in the Middle Ages, when they were written.

Your synopsis of the Cinderella book sounds like the Disney movie, which is not  
unreasonable to expect of a Disney book. Also Disney was promoting and idealising  
the American Middle Class lifestyle of the late forties, fifties, and early sixties.  
This comes through in Cinderella partially in some of the things you complain about  
in that book.

The scene you describe from *Bambi Grows Up* is also straight out of the movie,  
as I remember it that scene is the second or third from the end.

You started this section of reviews by commenting on your admiration (past and  
present) of Disney's work. Based on these reviews I'd say that you are probably  
being nostalgic about your memory of these films from your childhood and you haven't  
seen them very recently.

As research for this letter I dug out my copy of Felix Salten's *Bambi* to look  
up the fight scene between Bambi and Ronno. In the book Bambi has known Ronno all  
his life and the fight takes place in the middle of the book, Chapter 12 of 25,  
rather than near the end and his father is nowhere to be seen, though he does run  
into "the old stag" in the previous chapter.

Orion Peridot

4.

VALERIE VOIGT DISCUSSES BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS

A letter and the response reprinted from *Pagana* #30, Ostara '86.

The following was written to me as POWSIG coordinator, and I answered with a personal letter, which I am also excerpting.

When you say that your family are "born again" Christians, do you mean that they weren't always Christian? I was raised Catholic and rebelled against the church at an early age --- it never made sense to me then --- all the rules. The occult scared me, though, especially when I was confronted by Satan in the flesh. I guess you'd think I was nuts. It was no big deal I guess, but I still sort of cringe when I recall some of my experiences.

Susie, Oregon

Dear Susie,

My family were Christians all along, in the sense that they believed in the Christian God and the Christians' teachings that Jesus was the son of God, and so on, and they went to church. "Born-again," however, is a technical term applying primarily to conservative (not necessarily fundamentalist) Protestant Christianity. Protestants do not have absolute monopoly on the term, as the Catholic charismatic movements share both the term and the experience to which it refers. Being "born again" is the word used in these groups for the individual's singular experience of accepting Jesus as his or her personal Savior. It involves:

- 1) Confession of sin, and explicit recognition of one's inherently sinful nature and separation from God; this includes the understanding that the individual is doomed to go to Hell unless saved from it by expiation of all sin, past present, and future (this is what a Christian means when saying, "Jesus washed my soul clean").
- 2) Recognition, explicitly stated, of Jesus of Nazareth as the sole Son of God, the Christ who died IN ORDER to expiate the sins of humanity --- the Savior. (In virtually all cases, it is assumed as a corollary that acceptance of this particular doctrine is the only valid spiritual path, and that all other paths and religions are "false" and wicked.)
- 3) True and sincere opening of the individual's heart, asking Christ to live there.
- 4) The entry of Christ into the heart of the individual. This is the gnosis, the direct experience of Divinity, and this is the most crucial part.

I cannot presume to speak for all Christians (or probably ANY since I am not one), but this last experience is usually pretty earthshaking for the person. A warm wave of sensation of pure Divine love washes over and through the person, often with a literal "washing" feeling, as the Christ enters the heart of the person and shines there with Divine light. The feeling is strong, sure, and heady --- often intoxicating in a literal way.

That is, as I understand it, the essence of what it is to be "born again" as a Christian.

Examples of prominent "born-again" Christians are Billy Graham, Senator Barry Goldwater, Jerry Falwell, and Ronald Reagan. Social and political conservatism tend to correlate highly with the "born again" branches of Christianity, but the correlation is not absolute. In cases where they do coincide in one individual, the political/social stance and the religion are usually subjectively linked together by the individual.

As I said, I am not a Christian. I cannot agree with premise #1 (that humanity is inherently sinful or evil). I feel that any defect in the product is the

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responsibility of the manufacturer, not the product. Nor do I see anything undesirable in most of the activities that Christians (and their Bible) call "sinful." To accuse Ultimate Divinity with having stacked the deck the way the Christians say it is stacked, appears to me, rather slanderous; it demeans Divinity ethically as well as subverting Divine power.

My own perception is that humanity is an integral part of Nature, just as a fox is. A fox kills and eats a rabbit; is the fox sinful? No, it is just a fox. It is following its own Nature (its own Tao, if you want to use mystical terms). Is a horse better than a fox because it eats grass instead of other animals? No, it is just a horse, following its own Nature. Both are part of the Balance of Nature, the harmonious dance of the Universe.

I am a Witch. I honor the Old Gods of Nature, and I feel my own connection to Nature, and what I do arises from the way I understand that connection.

The Divine love that the Christian feels upon acceptance of his Christ is not, it turns out, solely the experience of Christians. Gnosis, direct experience of the Divine, is at the root of all mystical experiences. This, rather than any particular doctrine, is the essence of religion, all religion. Not everyone professing religion experiences it; but every religion has a central place for it. Divinity, it seems, embraces all, in spite of different people's efforts to restrict its activity!

You mentioned having met Satan in the flesh, and being frightened of him. I have met him, too --- I was startled, but not frightened. I told him he did not belong in my world, and to go away; he reached for me, and the floor seemed to drop from beneath my feet. Angry, I blocked his reach and said, "NO NONSENSE. BEGONE!" And he was gone. He has never returned. I could call him back (certainly I have no wish to), but if I did I would not have trouble banishing him again. He is not part of my world.

The way I view it, Satan (at least the Christian Devil --- I say this to distinguish him from a reported Baltic fire-god of similar name --- Sathanos --- and physical description) is, like so many spirit-entities, an egregore. An egregore is an entity which began as an imagining, and which became more real as different groups and individuals put more psychic energy into it by believing/focussing/ thinking about it, until it has actually taken on an existence of its own. Certainly, Christians have put a lot of energy into believing in their Devil; but since he is the product of the human imagination, he is therefore subject to human Will. This is certainly consistent with my experience. The hitch, however, is KNOWING that: a person who thinks s/he is powerless before an entity has, by that belief, abdicated their own strength and surrendered.

A rather nice book on magical theory, easy to read, is *Real Magic* by P.E.I. Bonewits, Creative Arts Book Company, paperback. It discusses egregores (calling them by the author's own term, "switchboards") pretty competently.

The occult is definitely NOT for everybody --- matter of fact, probably not for most people. Especially the ones who dabble --- it isn't a place for dabblers. Too easy to get into trouble.

If, however, you should ever find yourself facing the Christian Devil again, you should be able to deal with him okay; just say, "By the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, I banish you!" or words to that effect. After all, part of the Devil's nature and definition as an egregore is that he is subject to the Christian God as personified in the Christ. If you were still a believing Catholic, I might suggest that you call on Mary the Mother of God instead, since She is so much more familiar to me: Witchcraft honors, before all other Gods, the Goddess; the Mother of All.

Regards, Valerie Voigt

### ECLECTICISM: A PROTEUS TRADITION TRADITION

Like many other people, I became involved in the Craft because I was searching for spiritual and mystical meaning. My first experiences in the Craft, however, were within a very traditionally Gardnerian coven. Every Sabbat, every esbat, every ritual of any kind, were read by the HPs and HP out of the Book of Shadows. Word for word the same, every time. The HPs' attitude seemed to be, "Gerald said it, I believe it, and that settles it." BO-RING!! Protestantism with no clothes on! But every once in a rare while I'd feel a stirring of genuine spiritual meaning (usually when the HP refused to stick to the script), and I stayed in the coven, hoping for more.

The coven membership dwindled, and we sought other groups to join; in the process, I had the extreme good fortune to be accepted by Proteus. Here was what I'd joined the Craft to find! Instead of the same two people reciting the same stuff over and over again, I participated in an astonishing variety of rituals planned and performed by many people with different approaches to the same events. In a word, eclecticism.

This eclectic spirit, which is probably the core of Proteus' teachings, gives me (and, I assume, other Proteans and Proteids) more opportunities to experience many kinds of mystical/mythological/spiritual/psychic transformations.\* I've learned about Hindu, Norse, Greek, Arabic, Chinese, Celtic, and African myth-symbols, and felt different emotional responses to each. I've danced around the Maypole many times, and each Beltane was from a different point of view. And then there are the teaching Circles; not Sabbats, and not exactly traditional esbats either, but a way for different coveners to share a particular area of expertise with one another, or to present some personal favorite religious experience in a way others can participate in. I've priestessed my share of Sabbats (I'm doing this Samhain, in fact), and I've presented teaching Circles of my own (and in partnership with coven sisters and brothers). And I can't wait for the next Circle, to see what surprises my fellow Proteans will come up with this time!

Of course, not everybody is thrilled with everything. When, say, Night Rainbow does a Circle incorporating Sufi chanting, I might really "get into" singing the chant, while, say, Noonday Sun feels weird chanting in a language he doesn't understand. Some of my own rituals have been real dogs--you can't win 'em all. But one thing it never is, is boring.

Cleindori and Daystar, of course, set up Proteus this way for the purpose of teaching, and it's succeeding beyond their wildest dreams. We all learn from each other, all the time, and it's exciting and surprising and FUN!!! While other covens of the Proteus lineage may stick more closely to the BoS (as is their choice), the eclecticism at the root of Proteus' teaching is precisely what gives them the background to make this choice. I have a line I can use to sum up how I feel about the eclectic Proteus tradition:

"Religion is kinda like bread--it's better for ya when it's homemade."

Ashta'arArthura

\*If you don't already know, go look up who Proteus is and what he's famous for.

#### Familiars

I've lived with cats all my life. My mother's cat, Foggy, slept in my cradle before I was born. I now live with two cats, Nandy and Obi, whom I adopted at an animal shelter back when I was a dedicant in a coven's training grove. Nandy and Obi are members of the family, but not familiars: they show no more interest in human magick and religion than in other human eccentricities, like reading and crocheting and typing (i.e. they sit on the books, lie on the knitting, walk on the keyboard, and chew the alter tools). I didn't need to specify "human"; they show no interest in any magick, not like my previous cat, Cindy, who demonstrated great skill in such feline magick as teleportation and levitation.

I've arranged to buy a snake. I'll let you know if it grows into a familiar.

#### Coming Out of the Broom Closet

I've never been in the broom closet. I've been a weirdo all my life and it was never secret, so when I became a Witch I never thought of keeping that secret, either. I wear a pentacle necklace whenever I leave the house. In six years, the only bad result has been three times fellow pedestrians shouted abuse at me, calling me a Satanist. This compares favorably to three times fellow pedestrians shouted abuse at me, calling me a "kike", and untold hundreds of times both pedestrians and motorists have shouted abuse at me because I'm female.

Our hard-working editors asked for stories. Of all the times people have seen my pentacle and started to converse, guardedly at first and then more enthusiastically; of all the times I've seen a pentacle on a stranger's necklace and started a conversation, guarded at first and then more enthusiastic, no network has ever resulted. When I took a Tarot class at a city college, I noticed a classmate with a pentacle necklace and introduced myself. She attended a Lammas celebration at my house and I told her about the upcoming first Harvest Moon Festival, but now we only see each other at Harvest Moon Festivals.

There are two people at work who each had exactly the same conversation with me on separate occasions. Each noticed my pentacle, glanced suspiciously around the room to make sure no co-worker was listening, and started to whisper to me, first asking leading questions. Eventually they decided that I'm not an I-don't-know-what and told me about their favorite channels! One of these two joined a Tarot network I told him about.

The other day my freemate and I went to the Natural History Museum. We stopped at the Membership Desk to pick up some brochure or other, and the volunteer asked whether my necklace meant anything. We ended up conversing for almost half an hour, mostly about what's the best place to buy crystals.

However, sometimes I wish I were in the broom closet. Then I wouldn't have to worry about how my behavior reflects on the Craft. For example, when I lose my temper, I feel guilty afterwards because the people who saw me lose my temper will think all Witches are bad tempered.

#### Open Letter to Tarotstar

Dear Tarotstar,

I don't think I know any Witches who object to magick or to occult stores. I think it is possible that the Wicca publisher you complain of doesn't object to spellcraft or occult stores, but does want to publish only material that views Wicca as a religion. You have a right to practice spellcraft without religion, I have a right to practice spellcraft and religion despite your jibes, and the publisher has a right to choose what he/she will publish.

As for your claim that a person can only learn ethical spellcraft by first doing curses, that's analogous to claiming that a person can only learn to be an ethical citizen by first committing murder. Killing or injuring a person by spellcraft is just as unethical (or just as ethical) as killing or injuring a person by handgun.

### The Role of Men in Wicca

I agree with all the writers last ish. I believe in co-ed covens, co-ed leadership, and judging people by their merits not their gender. However, I was a bit disappointed by the lack of diversity. There could have been an article about all-male covens or groups and what benefits they give men (who might also be members of co-ed covens). There could have been an article about all-female covens and why men shouldn't feel offended at them. There could have been an article by a man about whether he'd had trouble adjusting to a religion where the main symbol of Deity is female. There could have been an article by a woman about what Pagan men have taught her about the Horned Lord. Or about the Goddess.

### Samhain Wind

As you already know, Quetzalcoatl is a very popular Aztec god. The first part of his name, quetzal, is a bird with beautiful green feathers, and the second part, coatl, is a snake or dragon. It is therefore usual to call Quetzalcoatl the Feathered Serpent. Quetzalcoatl wears the wind jewel as a necklace pendant. The wind jewel is a cross-section of a sea shell, showing the spiral pattern. When I mentioned this to my roommate, he suggested that this is because if you hold the unbroken shell, before it was cross-sectioned, to your ear you can hear the wind.

Quetzal feathers were so valuable that the word quetzal also means precious, and coatl also means twin, so Quetzalcoatl is also the Precious Twin. Who his twin is depends on which myth. Ecoatl, the Wind Serpent, Ehecoatl, the Storm Serpent, is his twin. Since e means wind, ehe very logically means storm. And it makes sense for a wind serpent, flying in the air, to have feathers.

It makes sense to think of the wind as a snake. Both are long and limbless, sinuous, cold, and strong. Robert Graves (whom I admit is not a reliable source) wrote that Italian peasants represented the scirocco (the hot wind out of Africa that blows across the Mediterranean and makes people crazy) as a coiled serpent. Even if the Italian peasants didn't actually make a connection between winds and snakes, Graves (a respected poet) did.

It also makes sense to make a connection between winds and spirits. For starters, it's the same word. "Spirit" means "breath". Inspiration is breathing in, drawing air into your lungs. Expiration is breathing out, pushing air out of your lungs. People who breathe can get "winded," can get their "second wind."

Think of the winds that blow at Samhain. They've been blowing for awhile, but now they howl around us in the dark. There are spirits riding the winds: ghosts, dead leaves, Wild Hunters, seed pods, rain clouds, voices who speak of the past and the future, voices invisible who can speak through masks, black mirrors, the patterns of smoke and fire. Listen to the voices when you scry, a Samhain tradition. Let the winds bring your dead for a reunion visit, a Samhain tradition. Look death in the face; cry at endings, loss; cry in terror; work through to rebirth, like the snake shedding its skin. Thank the Wind Serpent who brings the clouds; thank the Cloud Serpent who spills the precious tears of water that let the earth grow green jewels, green feather leaves, green serpent stems, green plants. Thank the Serpent Dress Lady, Mother Earth.

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Second, I can't cope with my relatives as it is. They don't mind my religion, but they do mind my weight (heavy), my career (computer programmer), my college (Bryn Mawr), and my housecleaning (non-existent). The older ones used to like to tell me that I was growing up to be just as bad as my mother. In my early twenties, it dawned on me that I didn't love or like or enjoy these people, they were aggravating and not interesting, and so it struck me as automatic to delete them from my reality. The only blood kin I even speak to nowadays are my mother and my brother.

So you can see why I am not thrilled to read statements about how oneself created the situation and should change it. It strikes me as being true to some extent, but within limits. Some situations do involve real things (which tend to be intractable) and real people (who tend to have free will of their own). The situation is chosen by them as well as by us.

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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Last ish I copped, so there were two ish #9s, so this is ish #11. This is the Samhain '88 ish. Since PS #0 was dated Samhain '87, this is the anniversary issue. I would have liked to give you a large and impressive annish, but it seems that one year of PS has drained all the writing energy from the Protean community. Not very much material is being sent me. Even I myself am not writing very much material.

I must thank Eluki bes-Shahar, who sent me quotes to use for fillers. Fillers indeed! In this ish, they're filling a whole page! Where are the rest of you?

Lately I've been thinking about hurricanes. First there was Hurricane Gilbert. It set a lot of hemispheric records for things like most destructive hurricane, highest wind speed, and lowest air pressure, and it took an absolutely straight path across the Caribbean. I watched that unnatural and impossible path on television and became convinced that Gilbert is the result of three years of absolutely everybody working for rain and praying for rain for the Midwestern drought. Well, we got rain - when Gilbert crashed into Mexico, it turned into downpours all the way North to the Canadian border - but we got our rain and Mexico and Jamaica paid the price.

Then Hurricane Joan was even weirder. It took a due straight path across the Atlantic, hitting Central American countries which are never hit by hurricanes, killing people and

doing damage. It crossed Central America and entered the Pacific, where it changed its name, if I heard the radio correctly, to Tropical Storm Miriam. And isn't the hurricane season supposed to be over by this time of year?

The Midwestern drought, by the way, started me wondering about the proper Pagan response to a blighted harvest. The movie *The Wicker Man* must have had very effective cinematography, because it (and not newsreel footage of the Dust Bowl) supplied the visuals that spring to my mind for blight. Remember the scrapbook with the photos from each year's Harvest Festival, showing the Harvest Queen in her white dress standing by a huge pile of overflowing crates of apples, and the latest photo showing last year's Harvest Queen standing by a small pile of crates containing a few shrivelled apples each?

Obviously, the first way the Summerislars responded to a blighted harvest was to celebrate the Harvest Festival anyway, biting down their fear and disappointment in order to act joyous, thanking the gods for bounty and carefully not mentioning the inadequacy of said bounty.

Is that sort of behaviour Pagan realism and contact with Nature? Would it have been more proper to follow Orion Peridot's suggestion and hold a Harvest Lamentation instead? The etiquette columnists would disapprove horrendously of complaining because someone (Mother Earth) had chosen not to give a voluntary gift.

For everyone who only believes in what can be measured:

When science is presumed capable of solving  
all the troubles of life,  
science assumes the role of, and is no better than,  
superstition

For the man whom no magic will charm may, in the end,  
find himself by means of a darker sorcery,  
upon a desolate shore."

*Loren Eiseley, The Star Thrower*

"The acceptance of the supernatural is a widening of our grasp of the universe,  
its own numinous quality,  
which the man who sticks to daylight fails to grasp,  
for the universe itself is as supernatural  
as the great white whale."

*Eiseley, The Lost Notebooks of Loren Eiseley*

"...whenever a myth has been taken literally its sense has been perverted;  
but also, reciprocally,  
whenever it has been dismissed as mere priestly fraud or  
sign of inferior intelligence,  
truth has slipped out the other door."

"...the spontaneous impulse of the spirit to identify itself with something other than itself  
for the sheer delight of play transubstantiates the world—  
in which, actually, after all, things are not quite  
as real or permanent,  
terrible, important, or logical  
as they seem."

"It is, in fact, only those who have failed [in the capacity for play],  
one way or another, in their manhood or womanhood,  
who become our penny-dreadfuls,  
our gorillas and baboons.

*Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology*

"...since the rituals of the ice age hunters...we had kept, some of us,  
the memory of the perfect circle of compassion from life to death and back again to life.  
The completion of the rainbow of existence."

*Eiseley, The Star Thrower*

"It is very seldom that  
the same man knows much of science and about the things that were known  
before ever science came."

*Lord Dunsany*

## DANCING YOUR POWER ANIMAL

Michael Harner is an anthropologist who studied Jivaro Indian shamanism. He wrote a book, *THE WAY OF THE SHAMAN*, to tell the rest of us how to do it. Harner explains: "To perform his work, the shaman depends on special, personal power, which is usually supplied by his guardian and helper spirits....The guardian spirit is often a power animal, a spiritual being that not only serves and protects the shaman, but becomes another identity or alter ego for him....The fact that a person has a guardian spirit does not in itself make him a shaman. As the Jivaro point out, whether an adult knows it or not, he probably has, or has had, the aid of a guardian spirit in his childhood; otherwise he would not have had the protective power necessary to achieve adulthood....To a shaman it is readily apparent that many Westerners have guardian spirits, as evidenced by their energy, good health, and other outward manifestations of their power."

Harner explains that one's individual guardian animal spirit is unified with the entire species to which it belongs, so that the shaman possesses the power not only of a bear or an eagle, but of Bear or Eagle. The power animal can appear in animal or human form, but it helps the shaman to shapeshift into the animal form, as well as telling information to the shaman, and lending him raw power. Dancing a dance with the movement style of your power animal is a way of evoking (or invoking) your animal spirit. It is also pleasant for the animal spirit, who enjoys physical exercise in a physical body. "Dancing your animal is an important method for keeping it content and thus making it reluctant to leave you."

One of the brothers in my home coven devised a ritual which combined Harner's shamanic method of dancing your animal with traditional chants from European Witch trials. First, after we cast the Circle, all the coveners go into trance and issue an invitation to all the good and helpful animal spirits, inviting them to dance with us tonight. Sometimes we played songs like Charlie Murphy's "Call to the Animal Spirits". Then the animals come into the Circle and look us over. From the corner of my eye, I've seen the animals walk through the Circle and sniff at the people. Quite a number of animals have sniffed me before one has licked my face, or lain down on my feet, or rubbed its furry head against my hand, in sign of having chosen me.

Then each person takes a turn to come into the center of the Circle and dance. The dancer holds the rattle. The priest/ess bangs the drum four times and intones: "Thou now into a (name of animal) shall go, with joy and dancing and little woe. Thou shalt go in the Horned Lord's name, aye, and come home safe again." The person then dances, with movements directed by the animal. When one person dances, the other people in the Circle can often see the animal with their physical eyes, and I find it remarkable how often I recognize the animals, from having seen them while they were looking over the Circle.

The animals who have chosen me include a Galapagos Tortoise, a Snake, a Unicorn, and a Cougar. The Tortoise left me very aware of the lightness and flexibility, even flightiness, of my human body, while the Snake was frustrated at my lack of sinuousness, and the Unicorn was hungry to eat flowers.

When the animal is done dancing, the dancer looks at the priest/ess and shakes the rattle four times. The priest/ess bangs the drum four times and intones: "We thank you (name of animal) and set you free. Return to human, and blessed be."

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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This is the Yule '88 PS. Nextish will be the Oimelc '89 issue, if I receive enough material (I already have one article and some poems). The reason there is a Yule issue is because Judy and Ashta'ar responded to my threat not to even publish a Yule ish without material. Thank you, Judy and Ashta'ar. I wish a Happy Winter to those of you in temperate zones. Have fun building snowmen, and I hope you don't have to dig your cars out too often. Here, I believe that the Rainy Season has finally, blessedly, started, after being delayed far too long by a high pressure zone and a low pressure zone that got together to give us too many days of 80° temperatures and wildfires.

Contemporary Winter Solstice Customs  
or, "All I Want For Christmas Is The Sun God Back"

December is probably the easiest time of year to be openly Pagan without completely coming out of the broom closet. For some reason, out of all the ancient seasonal festivals, the Winter Solstice fire/sun traditions have lasted as "Christmas folk customs". Hannukkah, too, is obviously a Hebraicized fire festival. All the popular customs of the season are symbolic ways of getting the Sun God's fire reborn. Those lights on the Christmas tree were originally little bitty candles in little bitty holders that clipped onto the tree branches (yes, they did cause uncountable tragic fires). If you have a fireplace in your home, you probably burn a Yule log; if you don't have a fireplace, maybe you serve Yule Log cake, or serve plum pudding with flaming brandy. Or you light the candles on the menorah, or put fake candles in each window of your house. And the wonderful thing is, you can do all these things without anybody getting suspicious about your religion. You can even display a large, ornate pentagram, if you tell people it's a Christmas star. (I made a lighted one for my house.)

Perhaps it's just the feeling that winter is never going to end that (on some subconscious level) keeps the Winter Solstice customs alive through the centuries. Certainly, with darkness falling around 4:30 PM in New York, it seems logical to do sympathetic magick to bring back the Light. (The cross-religious meaning is intentional; in the Middle Ages, the pun on Sun/Son born at midwinter was used extensively). But it's just so much fun to be able to celebrate Yule (it's even used as a synonym for Christmas!) with our own symbols, right out in the open with the Jews and Christians.

We might as well wallow in it while we have the chance. Get a nice big evergreen tree (still green when other trees look dead), and cover it with bright lights and glittering decorations. Light candles and log fires, or at least enjoy flaming desserts. Drink wassail ("was hael", or "be healthy"- a sensible toast during the colds-and-flu season), sing old songs (or write new ones). Don't forget the mistletoe (boy, is that ever an ancient pagan custom!) and holly, but remember that the greens must be out of the house by Candlemas. Give gifts, get together with family and friends, party hearty, and show the Sun what to do. "Hang a shining star upon the highest bough,/And have yourself a merry Winter Solstice now."

--Ashta'arArthura

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## BOOK REVIEW

Feinstein, David and Stanley Krippner  
Personal Mythology: The Psychology of Your Evolving Self  
Los Angeles: Tarcher, 1988

Everybody lives by myth. The stories we tell ourselves, whether drawn from the great mythologies of tradition or from popular entertainment, create the forms by which we interpret our experience and model our behavior. I used to think that the difference between us neo-Pagans and everybody else is that we know it and they don't. Turns out that some of them do.

This book, by two psychologists, I would call a must for every working Pagan priest/ess. Starting with the premise that everybody lives by myth and sometimes the myths we are living by no longer serve us well, these authors have created a 5-step system for changing one's guiding myth. The reader is lead through a process of understanding what parts of her old myth need changing, and what new stories ("counter myths") are coming to the fore. The third step is to create a story that integrates the best values of old and new. The final two steps are commitment and implementation.

Each step is a chapter in the book, and each chapter contains a series of exercises and techniques. People actually working through the exercises are advised to allow two weeks per chapter. The exercises are drawn from a wide variety of contemporary schools of psychology, and seamlessly woven together. If you are into psych, the integration itself is a work of art. If you aren't, what you'll see is a skillful, complete and workable system. In all cases, the advice is good: sensible and gentle. The feeling tone of the book, throughout, is kindness.

Many of the exercises are guided meditations - what we call pathworkings. For these, a two tape set is also available, at cost. The tape is very well produced and a lot more convenient to use than pathworking from a book. The book and tape are available at a slightly discounted package price of \$27.85 from Innersource, 777 East Main Street, Ashland, OR 97520. (make check or M.O. to Innersource). I think buying it that way will channel more of the profits to the authors, as I get the impression one of them is associated with Innersource.

A coven could draw on the exercises in this book piecemeal or choose to work the system straight through as a group. Either would be rewarding. Most of all, I would recommend it as a handbook for personal development, for use between Second and Third degrees.

The skills and insights to be gained will greatly enrich your Craft.

Judy Harrow

## WARNING

I write this in November '88, after the American elections, after the victory of Likud in the Israeli elections, after Maggie repealed some of the traditional rights of Englishmen (freedom of speech and the right not to incriminate oneself). Wordsworth would be shocked. Remember Wordsworth? He wrote that grand sonnet about "It is not to be thought of that the Flood of British freedom....should perish....We must be free or die". He also wrote the one about "The world is too much with us", which every Pagan should hurry to read before the Fundies ban it.

Looking at the trends of world politics -- in the USA, such things as the Religious Right, Satanism hysteria, cult hysteria, child abuse hysteria, drug abuse hysteria, AIDS hysteria, increase in racism on college campuses, increase in incidents of anti-Semitic violence and/or vandalism -- I expect that most of us reading this will live to see the rise of a Nazi-type regime in the United States. This is a prediction, not a prophecy: I have not done divination, nor do I have a message from the gods. But I expect that the whole mixed bag of us will be taken away from our homes and jobs, put in concentration camps or possibly executed outright. Pagans, Witches, "cultists", anarchists, socialists, "liberals", libertarians, feminists, recreational drug users, civil rights advocates, free lovers, Jews, homosexuals. They might do it on excuse that we are alleged drug users (drug hysteria). They might do it on excuse that we are alleged homosexuals or promiscuous people (AIDS hysteria). Things might get so bad that they don't need an excuse, just admit outright that they're imprisoning and killing us for being "liberals" and "humanists".

Everyone who is reading this is out in the open and identifiable as a Pagan sympathiser. If you are on mailing lists, you may use an Outer Court name and a PO box, but the government already knows who rents all the PO boxes. If you read zines on a friend's subscription, you should know that when they take your friend away, they will ask all the neighbors whom her associates were. The same for attending coven meetings at a friend's house. If you think you are a competent person, capable of fleeing a police state, I suggest that you prepare to do so. Don't panic, keep your home and job, but have a contingency plan. Keep your passport up to date, keep gold under a rosebush in your garden and silver coins in your mattress, keep your antennae alert to know when it's time to run, and read the papers to know where to run -- you wouldn't want to jump to an even more repressive country.

Meanwhile, maybe if you all join me, we can put a fairly complicated verbal message out on the astral. "To all the Witches who are not in contact with us, to every new sister who has just discovered that there is a name for what she's believed all along, to every solitary who is practising a tradition handed down in his family for generations. If you choose to remain hidden, hide well. Pretend to be what you are not and conceal what you are. We are asking this as a favor to us. Save your lives for our sake -- some of the hidden children of the Goddess must survive, so that the religion will remain."

A young Jedi's motto:

**Life goes seeking change, it does not wait for it.**

*Eiseley, The Lost Notebooks of Loren Eiseley*

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Overheard, muttered by Luke Skywalker in his later days, after being interviewed by yet another historian with yet another fresh new viewpoint on the fall of the Empire and the motives of those who caused it:

**We knew for what we fought:  
Life, life for the purposes of life, and is that then so small?**

*Eiseley, All The Strange Hours*

## DEALING WITH THE FEELINGS

John is an elementary school teacher. His work day starts early. Still, he finds time to attend a Circle on a Tuesday evening, two hours drive away from his home. He arrives on time only to find that Anne is late, as usual. At 9:30, Anne arrives with the same old excuses. Nobody calls her on them. Nobody tells her how she consistently creates serious hardship for others. Nobody tries to help her work out better ways to control her own life and time.

They know from experience that one such word, and a flood of tears will delay the Circle yet another hour. They know the crying is manipulative, but if they say so Anne will scream "these are my FEELINGS! Nobody can tell me how I should feel." An ideological position about the supremacy of emotion silences them. Anne's rudeness goes without challenge.

Everybody is being hurt. Anne is deprived of the very feedback that might help her grow. John had to choose between going to work exhausted or missing the full moon ritual. Tomorrow, he will be short-tempered with the kids. Other coveners are blocked from expressing their feelings about the waste of their own time. And, in the long run, the coven loses the sense of its own effectiveness. How could we be letting this all happen?

Feelings are important in the Craft. Very important. Just as important as any other form of input - logic, intuitions, observations or whatever. But not any more important. How did we get to the point where the display of emotion cuts off all other forms of input - even the emotions of other members - and takes away all choice? More important, how do we get out of this trap?

What we're seeing here is overcompensation, the "pendulum swing" phenomenon. Until very recently, the dominant, visible parts of Euro-American "high" culture - academia, the mainstream media, etc. - tended to emphasize a dry and lifeless rationality to the exclusion of all other functions of mind. Some people now call this "scientism." Spontaneity, compassion, emotion and intuition were all considered less "real" than mechanistic logic.

With discourse about feelings made illegitimate, all sorts of evils followed. We ran our society as though people did not matter. Because business and politics lag behind philosophy, in many ways we still do. Efficiency, rather than compassion, has guided us. People are driven from their communities to make way for roads. People are set to work on mind-killing assembly line or data entry jobs. Clearly a corrective was needed. And it came in such forms as the Human Potential Movement of the sixties, which evolved into the contemporary New Age Movement.

Once again, people could talk about feelings, dreams, love, intuition and still be taken seriously. But it's human for the pendulum to swing back a little beyond the sensible center. And that's what happened. For some people in the Human Potential

Movement, the New Age - and the Craft - instead of being equal to thought, feelings became superior to thought. "Don't think, feel" became a slogan, and even the title of a popular song.

In fact there are four primary functions of mind, well described by pioneer psychologist Carl G. Jung. These are intellect, passion, intuition and sensation. All are equally important, although differently applicable at different moments in our lives. A truly effective person will use all four functions in the appropriate balance.

When I began to study the Craft, I was immediately struck by how one of our greatest symbols, the quartered Circle, can represent Jung's four functions of mind. Over the years, I have come to define the function of the Center as choice, and its element as magic. We sit in the center and draw on the qualities of each quarter as needed, as we create our own lives. What's more, as polytheists, we have available to us many images of the Divine manifesting each of the functions of mind, teaching us that all of the functions of mind are equally sacred.

Nothing in Craft tradition tells us that one quarter is holier than another. Nothing in psychology tells us that one mental function is healthier than another. So I think we ought to be treating emotional input with some critical common sense, neither ignoring it nor allowing it to overpower other forms of input. Let's look a little more closely:

People coming out of the Human Potential Movement, and I am one, tend to believe that absolutely everybody, under absolutely all circumstances, has the right to feel whatever they are feeling. Feelings are to be treated with utmost respect, never ridiculed nor discounted. Nobody should ever be told "you shouldn't feel that way."

But we do not always have the right or the need to act on those feelings. For example, although I may always have the right to feel angry, only the rarest circumstances could ever justify violent behavior. It is not even always appropriate to express feelings verbally. When my neighbor asks me how I am on the elevator, I understand that this is a social ritual and my response is "fine, thanks, and you?" A detailed account of my emotional reaction to my mother's illness would be an imposition. Similarly, I often find it prudent to withhold my full emotional response on the job.

Every human being needs some places in their life where we can express whatever we are feeling fully. We need to be able to fully express ourselves, and to be heard and acknowledged by others whom we trust, in order to understand for ourselves what all of our feelings actually are. Some of our feelings are frightening. Others are socially unacceptable. Without support, we may conceal them even from ourselves. A coven may - I think a coven usually should - decide to be one such place.

Not all covens will choose to work this way. If a coven is

purely worship oriented, then members' emotional expressions may be an unwanted distraction. But some covens believe, as I do, that the Craft is a Path of personal spiritual growth, and that the coven is a place where we help each other along.

Covens with that understanding must allow and encourages each member's self-exploration, emotional and all other kinds. If there is not parallel intellectual and emotional growth, mystical practices and psychic skills can be big trouble! Spiritual growth demands that we face ourselves - the coven can be where we may safely do that.

The point is that if our right to free emotional expression within the coven comes from this need, then using that right implies an obligation to be about doing the work of self exploration and self transformation. We may express whatever we are feeling; we may not stop with that.

It's useful to think of emotions as a sort of internal divination. Good feelings tell us that something is going right in our lives; bad feelings tell us something is wrong. So feelings point us to places where we may want to make some changes - to increase the good feelings and decrease the bad ones. That's why it is important to understand just what our feelings really are.

I am responsible for my feelings. This does not mean that I necessarily caused or created them, nor that they are in any sense my "fault." Emotions are a primary reaction to the circumstances and situations in our lives. Whether or not I caused a situation doesn't really matter, I still have to respond to it in some way. And how I respond - how I behave - certainly does affect what situations I will meet in the future. That's how life works. All of us are "responsible" to ourselves for the way we feel.

There are many ways to respond to feelings that are painful or uncomfortable. I could anesthetize myself with chemicals or use the practices of mysticism as a form of escape. I could distract myself with sensational entertainment or with busywork. Or I can stay open to lessons about my life, even when they come to me via the medium of pain. As much as I can - as much as I have the personal strength, and the loving support of my kin - I will stay with the bad feelings until I can hear what they have to tell me. More and more, I understand this as the real meaning behind the traditional statements about being "willing to suffer to learn."

Perhaps the problem is temporary. I'm tired, or I haven't been eating properly, or I'm anxious about some upcoming event. Perhaps there's some ongoing self-defeating pattern in my behavior. Perhaps I need to move, or change jobs, to get myself away from destructive external influences. Perhaps I have unrealistic expectations of myself or others, leading to constant disappointments, and it is my belief system that needs to change. It isn't always easy to figure it out. Friends can help. My coven can help.

Time and space for self-exploration is most important, but a coven can do even much more than that. The people in my coven can

give me support, allowing me to release the feelings, and then challenging me to explore what brought me to this pain and what I will do about it. Because they have some objectivity, they may see what I'm missing, or even what I am denying. My coven can keep me from lying to myself. And when I decide what I want to change, the techniques of magic, and the energy of my coven, are there to help me make the changes. The clear eyes of my coven are there to help me see if the changes I am making are working as I hoped.

This is not to say that I think anybody should be required to share painful feelings with their coven. Other things must come first, among them building trust in the group and enough sense of personal strength to be willing to begin on a difficult process. These can't be forced, and trying to force them can do real damage. Besides, the apparent "coven potato," the person who sits there in silence while waiting for readiness, is doing the coven no harm. (Still, I would consider whether a person not yet really ready to work on their own "stuff" is ready for elevation and eventually to be a model and guide for others.)

But for the person who continually dumps emotional garbage on the coven floor and expects endless sympathy and attention with no challenge, there is one more thing to remember. You are responsible for your feelings, but nobody else is. Nobody is obligated to act on anybody else's feelings. Nobody is required to give you attention or to respond endlessly to your demands. In fact, if the coven is serious about being a context for growth, they will specifically refuse to encourage manipulative and dependent behaviors. We have agreed to support each others' work, not each others' self-pity.

The Native people of Australia have a healthy approach. If a woman is troubled, she may go to the place where the elder women gather. They will listen with compassion and offer suggestions for change. If she tries to make some of these changes, and later returns, they will help her understand how her efforts have and have not worked and offer further suggestions. If she has not taken action, they will listen and offer suggestions a second time. But if she returns a third time, having made no effort on her own behalf, the elder women will get up and walk away.

Magic is the art of changing consciousness in accordance with will. Craft tradition teaches us that we are never totally helpless, not even in the face of our own emotions, because that which we seek is to be found within each of us. The Circle is the place between the worlds, between the ideal and the manifest, where our ideals can filter through into the world of form. A coven is a group of friends helping each other to strive towards our truest ideals, the place where we can learn to practice all that we preach. We should settle for nothing less.

Judy Harrow

Aphrodite did something very nice for me, and I owe her a thanks offering. If I were living in a PaleoPagan culture, this would be easy: I would go to the local temple of Aphrodite and pay a priestess fifty bucks to kill a couple of pigeons in my name. (Later, the pigeons would be served for dinner at the priestesses' communal mess, so non-vegetarians need not think that I advocated cruelty to animals.) However, even the fragmented Pagan culture I live in is NeoPagan, not PaleoPagan, so each of us is supposed to be our own priest/ess and priest/ess of all deities. This is two problems for me. The first problem is about giving an offering: suppose the offering were a material object. To simply destroy it strikes me as vandalism, but to give it to a good cause would be an offering to the good cause, not to Aphrodite. No. If I am my own ritual specialist, my offering to Aphrodite must be a ritual. The problem is that Aphrodite is not one of the deities I've worked with in the past, and I have very few ideas about what kind of ritual she would like.

[In the intimacy of PS, but not in my column in PSN, I will specify that the reason that I hitherto have not worked with Aphrodite is that she and I have been quite hostile to each other. Wait before jumping to conclusions, all you armchair psychoanalysts. I don't object to sex -- there are plenty of deities of sex besides Aphrodite. I don't object to love -- there are plenty of deities of love besides Aphrodite. I don't object to beauty -- there are plenty of deities of beauty besides Aphrodite. I object to the fact the female conventional physical beauty is a marketable commodity (and I don't have any), which is one of the four main things that Aphrodite is in charge of. The other three are 1) sexual lust, 2) infatuation, obsessive limerance, which takes over a person's life and makes himir miserable and sometimes drives himir to suicide, 3) conventional romance: flowers, Valentine's Day, etc.]

To answer two question people have asked me, yes I am quite sure that I am dealing with Aphrodite, not Venus, Freya, Oshun, Branwen, Lakshmi, or the generic Goddess. This is my intuition. And yes I am quite sure that I owe a thanks offering. Not only do I pride myself on paying my debts, but I share the PaleoPagan fear (disapproved of by NeoPagans), that if we do not show proper gratitude when we receive gifts from the gods, they will take them away again.

So what I have been doing is thinking about what kind of ritual to script, and meanwhile lighting candles to Aphrodite, each with a prayer that says basically IOU.

And meanwhile, I have been wondering if my little personal experience is relevant to the large Pagan community. Are there priest/esses among us who have been called to serve a particular deity? Do they answer the call, or are they too swamped with seasonal celebrations and coven leadership? If there are priest/esses of particular deities in our community, how can the rest of us benefit from their expertise -- and what can we do in exchange?

I fantasize a network of priest/esses of specific deities. They would belong to various covens, where people called to be priest/esses of all deities would take care of the seasonal celebrations. They would counsel, lead rituals, and teach apprenticeship classes, in the service of their particular deity, for people in any of the covens associated with the network.

I am neither a priestess of a specific deity nor (at this time) a coven member, but if no one else wants the job, I volunteer to be co-ordinator of this network. Write: Rita Prince Winston, 254 So Mariposa #10, LA CA 90004.

An older Jedi motto:

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See everything,  
Overlook a great deal,  
Improve a little.

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Pope John XXIII

THE HEALING OF THE GODS: The Magic of Symbols and the Practise of Theotherapy  
Peter Lemesurier, Element Books Limited, Longmead-Shaftesbury-Dorset (England)

I would rather not recommend this book, because I don't like it, but I am afraid that I am finding it useful. Why don't I like it? Well, I don't know this author, but he seems to object to feminism, homosexuality, religion, the occult, and any attempt to change society. He claims that the Classical Greeks portrayed every possible archetype of human psychology, with a clear statement of its needs and wants, as some figure (a god or other character) in their myths. This strikes me as a very large claim to make on behalf of the Classical Greeks. He claims that, by careful study of the myths, he has made tables and charts of character in the myths, the archetype it represents, and its needs and wants. This strikes me as a very large claim to make on his own behalf.

The book begins with an explanation of how the invention of language destroyed mystical identification (an experience probably better known by its French name, participation mystique), which was a well-written but disappointing way to begin a book I had purchased with such high hopes.

He then went on to explain that all our neuroses and psychoses result from some archetype in our unconscious minds struggling to make itself felt -- these archetypes being the "gods". He points out that the original Greek word "therapeia" meant "worship", and recommends attending to the archetype instead of trying to extirpate the neurosis. This is not precisely a new idea: I read RE-VISIONING PSYCHOLOGY by James Hillman many years ago! Hillman, incidentally, used a phrase which is often quoted by many people, including me: "It is a comfort simply to know at which altar to sacrifice".

This thing is, until I read Lemesurier, I thought Hillman's phrase was only a rhetorical flourish to refer to Rumplestiltskin syndrome: the conscious mind's tendency to feel more comfortable and in control when it can pin a name on an experience. I never fully realised before that Hillman meant it literally.

He didn't mean that it is a great comfort to have a name for a problem (altho' it is). He didn't mean that it is a great comfort to read some stranger's exact description of what you had feared might be your unique problem (altho' it is). He didn't mean that the conscious mind could use willpower to rationally choose which gods would be healthy to worship. He meant: honor your neurosis, experience your archetype, and wait very, very patiently to see what opportunities for healing and growth it is bringing you.

Lemesurier has great faith in the ability of the archetype to signal its need to the conscious mind. He says you need but read through his tables and charts, and the right mythic figures will pop out at you. I think this is a great deal of nonsense, except that when I read through his tables and charts, an appropriate mythic figure did pop out at me....Excuse me, I must finish this review and run off to Trader Joe's to buy the right color candles.

[In the intimacy of PS, the right color candles are grey and black, and the god who popped out at me is Cronos. Lemesurier struck me as right-on when he pointed out that Cronos, in castrating his father Ouranos, was the new young generation, and the change inherent in the natural cycle, displacing/destroying the old, but Cronos, in resisting his own overthrow, demonstrated how the person who fears death and change thus becomes stubborn, bitter, weary, and depressed. Lemesurier's recommendation is that the person visited by Cronos should learn to accept change and recognize that death is a natural part of life. First, this gave me to remember Saturn in the garden/prison of Mabon in THE MYSTERIES OF MABON, and later I realised that this all ties in to Erishkegal in DESCENT TO THE GODDESS.]

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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This is the Oimelc '89 PS. Nextish will be the Spring Equinox '89 issue, if I receive enough material. The reason this is so puny is that we have the flu here. I believe that an appropriate way to celebrate Oimelc is with healing rituals for flu with humidifiers.

BOOK REVIEW

Spirit Warriors, by Devin D'Branagan (Pocket, 1988)

It's not the broom closet we're in, it's the skeleton closet; yet another novel sympathetic to the Craft, marketed as "horror fiction". I don't usually read horror fiction at all (real life has more than enough violence and fear for me, thankyouverymuch), but I picked this one up from the supermarket shelf, just to look at, because the cover illustration reminded me both of Iroquois False Face masks and Pacific Northwest native art. Leafing through it, I found Navaho and Hopi medicine practices, Celtic (Welsh) Paganism, and modern Witchcraft, all portrayed as the enemies of evil! As with Whitley Strieber's Catmagic, I decided that I wasn't going to let the fact that the book was labeled "horror" necessarily put me off.

Briefly, the plot involves an astrological conjunction that occurred on February 5, 1962, and the belief that a child born on that date will be either the moving force of the Age of Aquarius, or the Antichrist bringing Armageddon. There are two supernatural children born on that date: the daughter of the Mother Goddess, and the son of the Devil. As they grow to adulthood, they and their respective allies (or worshippers, or slaves) approach a final battle between Good and Evil. On the side of Good are the Hopi and Navaho sacred teachings, the Welsh Goddess-worshippers, and a Vietnam veteran who has conquered his alcohol habit. A psychically talented Gypsy woman and a coven of contemporary Witches become unwitting servants of the Evil One, but manage to change sides just in time. The outcome of the battle is influenced by the willing sacrifice of a valued leader ("the King must die"). I won't give away any more of the plot, except to say that Good ultimately triumphs.

It's a very powerfully written book, and the author obviously did her homework; she is as accurate about the Craft as she is about the Welsh, Gypsy, and Native American beliefs and practices. Oh, there's plenty of gore for the hard-core horror readers (the Evil One draws power from sadistic and violent sexual acts), but the nastiness is not the main point of the book. Is the author a Witch? I don't know. (I suspect she isn't a Gypsy or a Navaho.)

I heartily applaud this book, and I certainly urge you to read it, but I do have to wonder why we're still relegated to the category of "horror"; the skeleton closet is still a closet. But I'm very glad that Witches have finally become the "good guys", rather than being relegated to the "Rosemary's Baby" sort of horror story. Remember, they're selling this stuff in supermarkets, right next to the romances, Westerns, and Jackie Collins. So at least one segment of the general public is learning to view us favorably. It's a start.

## DIANISM IN A NUIT-SHELL

Recently, I got back in touch with my teacher after nearly two years and dropped a couple of bombshells on her: I had changed gender identity and had come together with two other women to form a Dianic coven. When the initial shock wore off, Rita sent me a complete run of Protean Synthesis and a solicitation for this article.

Several years ago I subscribed to several stereotypes regarding "those peculiar Dianics". They were theologically unbalanced, they hated men, they denied that men had souls, they were all lesbians, they couldn't spell (in the orthographic sense; no one has yet accused Dianics of inability to work magick), etc. etc. When I came together with my covensisters, I realized that these notions were at most partially true and some cases were patently false.

I believe there are only three valid generalizations that can be made about Dianics: 1) We are all feminists. 2) We all look to the Goddess(es) far more than to the God(s). 3) We are all eclectics. Note well that there are plenty of non-Dianic feminist Witches, non-Dianic eclectics, and non-Dianics who are primarily Goddess-oriented. There are also doubtless a good many feminist, Goddess-oriented eclectics who do not choose to call themselves Dianic. In my own case I use the "If it quacks like a duck, it probably is a duck" argument, as well as the fact that my HPS learned the Craft as a Dianic and runs Dianic rituals.

Some of the stereotypical generalizations I can dismiss out of hand. I don't know of a single Dianic who denies that men have souls. Even Z Budapest doesn't believe that piece of tripe anymore! It is true that Dianism is particularly attractive to separatists, and many separatists actually hate men. Many Dianics are lesbians. Some misspell words like "woman", "women", "egalitarian", and "holistic" on purpose. Not all fit these, however, and I think that Z Budapest in her younger, or spiritual bomb-throwing, days represents an extreme and a small minority. There are a number of males involved in Dianism, and some of those are men (NB: I use the terms "man" and "woman" to indicate gender identity, that is, how one's heart, mind, and/or soul are configured. I use "male" and "female" to indicate physical sex, that is, how one's plumbing is configured. I hope this dispels confusion.).

Theological and magickal imbalance is not so easily dismissed and needs to be addressed further, as that is the most valid objection that thoughtful Witches have to Dianism. The apparent imbalance comes from the Dianic emphasis on Goddess-worship, often to the complete exclusion of God-worship. This upsets many Witches' sense of polarity balance. The resolution of this apparent imbalance lies in the consideration of other polarities than sexual and/or gender as the primary polarity. There are indeed many other polarities to consider: true-false, life-death, dark-light, rational-mystical, creation-destruction, order-chaos, and good-evil, to name but a few. One problem with the masculine-feminine polarity is that there is a strong tendency to express all other polarities in terms of it. The Chinese were particularly fond of this, and mapped everything they liked into the yang side, and everything they disliked or feared into the yin side, the patriarchal no-accounts!

One thing I have discovered is that if you look hard enough, you can find goddesses to fit both ends of most polarities. Some even occupy both ends simultaneously. Inanna, my matron goddess, is a good case in point. She is the Sumerian goddess of love, war, wisdom (which she won in a drinking bout!), adventure, the heavens, the earth, and even of death (in the guise of her dark aspect, Ereshkigal). A very busy lady indeed is Inanna. At this point it becomes largely a matter of personal preference rather than of polarity,

### STAR LADY (secular version)

tune: Earth Mother, by the Jefferson Airplane

Earth Mother, your children are here,  
Rising from the sand-plains.  
Earth Mother, your children are here,  
Flashing through the starlanes.

Gaea was once our cradle  
With blankets of green and blue.  
Now we stand, grown and able  
To reach for what we view.  
Earth Mother, etc.

We stand as strong, young people.  
The Lady's taught us to fly.  
With a song and a kiss for our Mother  
We leap up into the sky.  
Earth Mother, etc.

We rise to greet our Lady  
Awaiting our joyous parade,  
Souls shrove of darkness, for when  
The ship lifts, all debts are paid.  
Star Lady, your sisters are here,  
Rising from the sand-plains,  
Star Lady, your brothers are here,  
Flashing through the starlanes.

Out burst the children of Gaea  
Into the the fathomless deep,  
Learning true names of the places  
Found as our home we sweep.  
Star Lady, etc.

We'll say hello to our neighbors;  
Our loneliness shall be gone.  
We recognize no division  
Of space that no one owns.  
Star Lady, etc.

whether one chooses a god or a goddess to occupy a particular place in a ritual.

No Dianic I know of denies the existence of the God. Indeed, He gets mentioned as the consort of the Goddess with some frequency in Z Budapest's HOLY BOOK OF WOMEN'S MYSTERIES, which is close a thing as there is to a Dianic version of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows. He is there, and sometimes we will invoke Him, when it is appropriate. He makes His own path, and we follow our own, and when they cross naturally we honor Him and do not avoid Him. We also do not force the paths to cross simply to lend an artificial balance to a ritual where none is really needed.

Now that I have spilled a good deal of ink over what Dianism is not, I should now say a few words about what it is: a movement of feminist, eclectic, Goddess-oriented Witches.

Feminism: This covers a vast multitude of virtues and sins. I do not think the stereotypical radical lesbian separatist is as common as is believed. Moderate to liberal feminism is probably far more common, even among Dianics. Certainly my own coven contains no separatists! There are too many nice men out there, even though surveys have shown that 70% or more of all men are potential rapists. The nice ones are found among those who are not in that repulsive majority; you just have to look to find them. One of the places you might find such nice men is in Dianic covens! Some are mixed groups, at least some of those of the branch founded by Morgan McFarland. My own is something of a mixed up group, I suppose. While we do not currently have any men in the coven, two of the three of us were born male and still have original-equipment plumbing. The Goddess and our HPS accept us unreservedly as women.

Eclecticism: If there is one dictum of Z Budapest's that bears repeating to everyone in the Craft, and which gets followed by many, it is "When in doubt, invent." Dianics tend toward creative ritual, drawing from any and all possible sources. I have yet to see a Dianic equivalent of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows, nor do I ever hope to see one.

Goddess Orientation: I've discussed this at some length while talking about polarity. There are some wags who have said that Dianics are nothing but matriarchal monotheists. I tell you three times: The Dianic Goddess is NOT Jehovah in drag! The Dianic Goddess is NOT Jehovah in drag! The Dianic Goddess is NOT Jehovah in drag! A much closer analogy would be that Dianics have taken the Classical pantheon and reclaimed most of the roles. This, too, is oversimplifying, but it is not nearly as wide of the mark as the usual criticism. At some point I may write up a long exegesis on the Dianic Goddess, but not here. My own personal involvement with Her comes from a great feeling of comfort I do not find elsewhere. She feels right. I have a great deal of difficulty accepting known rapists (most of the Olympian males are this, especially Zeus, Hades, and Pan!) into my personal pantheon. I also feel a personal vocation from the Mother; it is rather incongruous to me to embrace a male deity wholeheartedly when the Goddess comes to me and calls me Her daughter. This goes doubled, redoubled, in pentacles, and vulnerable for lovers of women.

I hope this little discussion of Dianism-in-a-Nuitshell has proved enlightening to you. It is not a path for everyone, but it is a valid path for some, and in considering it I hope that you can now ignore the garbage that has been put forth in the past as "data" regarding it.

Inanna Seastar  
Birdsnest Coven

#### LIVING ROOM LIGHT

tune: Living Room Light, by the Kinks

The wine's on the altar, the incense is smoking,  
The candles are burning so bright,  
The Priestess is ready, it's time to begin,  
So we turn off the living room light.

Your Circle's an obloid, you've not really centered,  
When skyclad you're really uptight,  
But I don't have to see you the way that you are  
Till we turn off the living room light.

My ritual's rotten, my cones are all cracked, and  
My subconscious is a real fright,  
But you don't have to see me the way that I am  
Till we turn off the living room light.

Our trust is imperfect, our love's rather banal,  
The Lady must think we're a sight,  
But we don't have to see ourselves the way that we are  
Till we turn off the living room light.  
Oh, we don't see ourselves the way we really are,  
Till we turn off the living room light.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR (from the Editor)

I am not entirely happy with Judy's article about Protean ethics. I think it contains some overgeneralizations, as well as confusing the ideas of a group taboo and of a general ethical principle.

General ethical principles are, by definition, binding on every person (at least every person within the same culture). Let me amplify that thought a little. General ethical principles are binding on every decent person because that is the definition of a decent person, and every person should attempt to be a decent person because that is the definition of "should". In this forum, I think I can use "refrain from committing rape" as an example of a general ethical principle.

Of course, all us Proteans are decent people: we refrain from committing rape without having to swear any oath about it. But suppose we took the spirit of Judy's statement "By our ethics you will know us" and defined Proteans as Witches Who Don't Commit Rape. That definition is either an absurdity or quite an insult against Witches of all other trads. The reason why saying that Proteans are Witches Who Don't Commit Rape is a true statement but a lousy explanation of what it means to be Protean is that general ethical principles, applying to all decent people, do not distinguish one decent person from another.

Therefore, there is a basic logical flaw in claiming "by our ethics you will know us" and simultaneously claiming that our ethics are universal principles, binding in themselves and not just because of an oath, binding on all ethical people and not just binding on the people of whom they are supposed to be a distinguishing characteristic.

This logical flaw could be avoided by simply admitting that the Protean oaths are group taboos rather than universal ethical principles. This admission would also avoid a tremendous amount of argument about whether specific tabooed actions are REALLY unethical.

For example, in the rule against "selling the Craft for money", we don't even have to touch the whole vexed question of full-time clergy and building funds. We can merely ask whether collecting royalties from writing a book on Witchcraft is unethical. It is? Why should the writer give the publisher a free gift of all the profit from her own labor? It isn't? Well, then, it doesn't make a whole lot of sense that it's okay to accept payment for writing one's lectures in a book and selling the book, but it's not okay to accept payment for saying one's lectures out loud in person.

I myself don't seek payment for either lectures or writing (because I'm an amateur? because I am oath-bound?), but I find it impossible to justify my position against accepting payment on any ethical ground except that I am oath-bound and I keep my word. Let me say that clearer: no one has yet convinced me that money changing hands is inherently evil.

Then there is the issue of magick without consent. I don't attempt to defend curses any more than I attempt to defend physical violence, and I don't attempt to defend love spells (and the like) any more than I attempt to defend fraud, but there are areas which are more debatable.

One is self-defense. I don't think it would be very useful to put wards on my home which contained a loophole, so that the wards would prevent people from entering my home to steal my property and rape and murder me, EXCEPT the wards would have no effect if the guy didn't consent to them.

And there's community defense. All magickal work to stop a currently active rapist, protect people from being killed by drunk drivers, or bring about world disarmament would be either forbidden by this rule or required to be done in a manner which would make it have no effect.

And of course there's healing. I find Rev. Rosalind Bruyere's argument that it is unethical to deny healing energy to needy people just because they haven't requested it to be just as persuasive as Judy's argument that it is unethical to send healing energy to people who haven't requested it.

These are issues to which there aren't any tidy, satisfactory answers.

Cautionaries:

"Americans are notoriously concerned more  
with verisimilitude than with truth.  
They are gossip-mongers, collectors of scandal, thinkers on rumor,  
and manifest a childlike belief in any story,  
no matter how incredible or outrageous,  
so long as there are enough 'facts' inserted  
to give it credence."

Daily Telegraph, *England*,  
17 Feb 83

"The greatest enemy of any one of our truths  
may be the rest of our truths."

*William James*

"One can always bravely defend one truth.  
When contradictory truths multiply,  
one is forced to recognize a certain mockery written into the very fabric of nature."

*Eiseley, All The Strange Hours*

"We all have our truths, Luke. All too often they depend on one's point of view."

*Obi-Wan Ben Kenobi, The Return of the Jedi*

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In protest of current trends:

A satisfactory human life...  
is possible only if proper respect is paid to all three world  
[of Work, Prayer, Carnival].  
Without Prayer and Work,  
the Carnival laughter turns ugly,  
the comic obscenities grubby and pornographic,  
the mock aggression into real hatred  
and cruelty.  
Without Laughter and Work,  
Prayer turns gnostic, cranky, Pharasitic,  
while those who try to live  
by Work alone,  
without Laughter or Prayer,  
turn into insane lovers of power,  
tyrants who would enslave Nature  
to their immediate desires —  
an attempt which can only end  
in utter catastrophe

*W. H. Auden*

This curious world we inhabit is more wonderful than convenient;  
more beautiful than it is useful; it is more to be admired and enjoyed than used."

*Thoreau, 1837 Commencement speech*

PROTEAN SYNTHESIS # 1 4

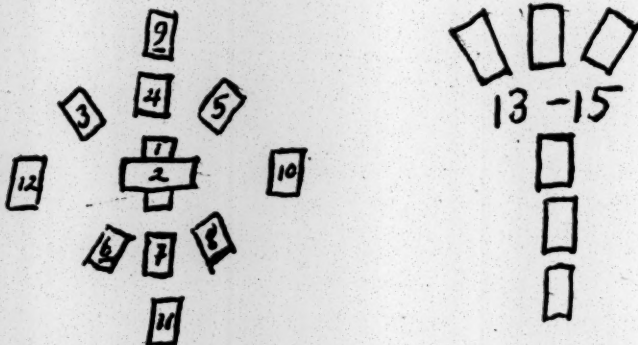
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A Protean Family Newsletter

Hello, everybody. Welcome to the Ostara '89 ish of PS.

ARTICLE FROM DANA MORGAN

One of the great lacks in the Tarot spreads I've seen is a sense of causation, of 'how and why did we get here?' Oh, there's the 'past', usually an influential event or two, but most spreads are designed to provide insight on the future. This spread is designed to provide insight into causes. It looks like this:



There are two optional "what next?" spreads for cards 13-15: either fan shaped for 3 choices, or linear for weeks/months progression.

The meanings of the positions:

1 & 2: The crux of the matter. Can be read as central conflict.

3,4,5: The positive aspects.

6,7,8: The negative aspects.

9: Air of the matter

10: Fire of the matter

11: Water of the matter

12: Earth of the matter

13-15: The fan --

The choices arising from the situation.

13-15: The line --

What's next? Months/weeks

This spread is useful for exploration and introspection.

A note on the negatives: 'up' is towards the center, not the perimeter. And spare me the mystic "negative is the womb-dark-growth time" crap -- this is the plain old shit-happens downside.

In the belief that knowing the causes helps us correct our Paths -- I hope this is helpful.

In light --

Dana

The Editor (Rita) would have put Rita's latest PSN essay here, but the computer ate it (after the hardcopy had been mailed to PSN). You aren't missing anything you haven't already read: it was a rigorously polite defense of Eclectic Mythology (much shorter than my article with the, alas, cute title GODS: THE MELTING CAULDRON), written as a reply to a new PSN columnist, Tarotstar.

LETTER FROM DANA MORGAN

"Summer slowdown -- no such thing. I worked and went to school. Fall came, and I tried to do school full-time, but had to drop back to part-time and work when fiance's job became a problem.

Scheduled a Jan 1 wedding, but had to move out in November when I discovered his son (14) had molested my son (3). Got the infection treated, got the whole story, and then we split. It's been hell.

But my Stephen has been therapized and is happy again. We're prosecuting the 14-year-old for criminal sexual conduct.

And I'm working full-time, and preparing to leave for full-time school in June. Going north to Ferris State U, to major in Accounting. Am up for some scholarships and a full-ride Pell grant ...and I'm scared of not having a steady paycheck, but I need to finish the education, so we're going.

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Please do publish my thanks to various members of the Protean family whose thoughts and workings and letters and calls have made the difference between falling off the end of the world screaming, and making it this far.

Thoughts on Judy's ethics thing. I've noticed a distinct absence of discussion, when the lady ASKED for dialog! Come on, folks -- everybody out there is in complete and total agreement?! (Rita interrupts here: A lot of fascinating topics that I would think people would be eager to ~~argue/abuse~~ discuss get raised in PS, but very few people send me reply articles or Letters to the Editor. Thank you, Dana, for being an exception.)

For my part (going from memory of the work), I find it at least crippling to live under an ethical system in which I can't slap a wrongdoer. Having to cause them circumstances where they can learn, etc, is just more work than many are worth. (Rita again: whether or not they're worth the work, I would think that a rule against magick without consent would even rule out sending them nice or useful things.) And, while I don't advocate Witch War or murder by magick at all!, I have found that sometimes a quick, sharp slap on the hand will strongly discourage mundanes from messing with us again.

And that stand ALSO requires responsibility for the actions you choose to call, and a willingness to eat the power of your spell if it backfires. But it also returns the power of making those decisions to adult Crafters (read: initiates), by which point it's you answering to the Gods.

Judy's is, however, a great system for neophytes -- learning to take trouble as a learning experience, without immediate retaliation, is a necessary lesson.

So, folks, there's my opinion. Anybody else out there have one?

Stay well --

Dana

#### GODDESS BLESS THE LASS

tune: God Bless the Grass, by Malvina Reynolds

Goddess bless the lass who lives in the man.  
He shuts her in a closet to forget her if he can,  
But closet walls are thin, and the lass breaks through  
To walk in radiant beauty in the world's full view--  
Goddess bless the Lass!

Goddess bless the dress that the man would wear.  
He shuts it in a closet to forget that it is there,  
But the woman in him wakes, and the dress goes on.  
She makes herself up pretty, and the man is gone--  
Goddess bless the Lass!

Goddess bless the lass who can stand and say,  
"I feel so sweet and loving; a girl I am today."  
A dainty woman now, in her frills and lace,  
She smiles at all her sisters, and her joy fills space--  
Goddess bless the Lass!

Goddess bless the lass who's a lady fair,  
Who always is a woman, no matter what she wears.  
In trousers and shirt, she's a girl inside,  
And when she's wearing dresses, her love spreads far and wide--  
Goddess bless the Lass!

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# WHERE DECENT PEOPLE DIFFER - the case for specific ethics

In the Dimelc, '89 issue of Protean Synthesis, Rita seems to be saying that behavioral guides come in two and only two varieties - group taboos and general ethical principles. On this basis, she puts the "Protean commandments" of "we don't force, we don't charge and we don't tell" into the category of a set of group taboos. So now I get to say that I think Rita is oversimplifying. What can I say -- we must both of us just love complicating things.

I think group taboos are directives people follow for what appears to be no particular reason, simply as a condition of group membership. Stuff like "we don't eat pork" or "we always dress in warm colors." When you look a little closer, apparently trivial customs like that are very effective in maintaining group identity. The more restrictive of behavior they are, the tighter the bonding they promote (kashruth observing Jews may not eat in other people's homes; this strongly discourages out-group friendships).

For groups that want a tight boundary, it's actually better if the rules that maintain identity have no ethical basis, so that the people left outside are not insulted and so that the sense of "usness" is as little as possible polluted with feelings of superiority. And although the group will usually miss a member who chooses to leave, no harm is done and no extra pain caused when s/he buys a blue coat this year.

General ethical principles are those that define all decent people in the society. Rita is correct in saying that a subgroup that defines itself by general ethical principles insults all other groups by implication. If we are the Witches Who Don't Commit Rape, then presumably others are the Witches Who Rape. (maybe there even are some, but let's don't get into that right now.)

[Come to think of it, I believe that "we don't tell" actually is a general ethical principle among Witches. For contrast, consider the mores of the Science Fiction Fan community, which places no value at all on personal privacy.]

But "we don't charge" and "we don't force" fall into a third category. These are questions on which decent Wiccans can and do disagree. Andras charges; Moose does workings without permission. They are two of my best friends in the Craft, certainly more than just decent. Nor do I want anybody simply agreeing to these restrictions as they might agree to wear only red, as a condition of group membership easily dropped if they later leave the group.

Because I think that my dear friends Andras and Moose are mistaken, much as I trust their good faith. I think there are good reasons not to charge and not to force, reasons that can be explained and understood. I think that "we don't charge" and "we don't force" are positions that can be adopted from belief rather than from simple affiliation.

Principles adopted that way and reinforced by oath will stick. They are binding in a way that a group taboo is not. They are

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binding even if the individual leaves the group. Have you considered that in later years, many Eleusinian initiates converted to Christianity, and we still don't know exactly what went on in the rites because even the converts did not tell? That's the kind of binding I'm talking about.

Although I can't say that "we don't charge" and "we don't force" are definers of decency, although decent people differ, they are what I believe. And I believe our magic works, so what we do matters. It is surely my right to share my skills only with people who share my beliefs. Since we added the dedication ritual that is very overtly the way it works in Proteus Coven.

For those of you who joined the family before it was a matter of formal oath - well, it was always a matter of informal teaching, as you know. So, while I cannot oathbind you retroactively, I can hope.

I'd like us to be better than decent, and I'd like the whole community to know it. Yes, by our ethics they shall know us - and by our competence and our creativity and our dedication.

In The Spiral Dance, Starhawk raised a question that has challenged and inspired me all these years. She asked what it would look like to have an ethic based on pride rather than guilt. This is what it looks like. I'm proud because all of you have given me reason.

DEIRDRE AND DANA [9/29/87]

Dance with me, Dana! The China Cat Sunflower  
Bubbles and jingles in midnight sun free.  
Bouncing, embracing, the twain of us racing  
On Down-Under bheer and what was in the tea.

Dance with me, Dana! For Lost Johnny's out there,  
He's braving the change-winds, the robots and all.  
Pull out all stops now, we'll dance till we drops now,  
And do a Space Ritual at Mountain Grill Hall.

Dance with me, Dana! The blessings of Eris  
Five-fold now surround us, our mirth will not die.  
Hagbard's a ride for us, Dillinger died for us,  
So dance with me now 'neath the Pyramid's Eye!

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APHRODITE: lover of us all

I must have really needed the push. Lady knows I've read stuff before, even stuff written by Rita, that hasn't set me off on a week long reading jag. I must have been hungry, real, real hungry, and not even known it.

Maybe I wasn't the hungry one. Maybe She was hungry for some recognition at last. I never realized how great a role She has played in my life. I never much acknowledged Her. I suppose I might beg forgiveness, except that She is the Lady of This Moment -- and bearing a grudge is as alien to her as any other frozen emotion.

Aphrodite. The so-called sex goddess. The Playboy bunny of Olympus. How blind I was! How blind we are!

I set off to write a "resource guide" for Rita - to review the various materials about Aphrodite that I have around the house (mostly on the unread shelf, but you know about the unread shelf). What I learned shook me.

Culture blind. Through all the long years of the Greyface Era, our culture has given us just two models of sexuality: repressed or corrupt. The Virgin or the Whore. The good girl or the tramp. We were taught that sex was so dangerous or evil that only the most severe restriction could render it safe. We were taught that only sex so trammelled could be blessed. Sex must be either dammed or damned.

And then came the sixties and our rebellion. But our revolution, as in so many other ways, underreached itself. In making sex free, we very often made it trivial. In reaction to the demonization, we banalized sex. We made it a commodity or an advertising technique. Trivial sex, casual sex, hurt people, and the backlash came. Sex apart from love and pleasure has nothing to do with Aphrodite.

Because I insist on the freedom to choose in the moment, a friend who feels safer within limits calls me "promiscuous." Then, seeing the offense on my face, she softens it to "random." I am neither. Very rarely, and not at all in the last sixteen years, have I ever had sex with a person I did not love. Promiscuous means corrupt; random means banal. I am neither; but what I am is simply not visible to Greyface and his followers.

Aphrodite laughs at social rules. All acts of love and pleasure are her rituals. Sex in the context of love and pleasure can be both free and sacred. And Aphrodite is so very much more than a sex goddess. She is the transformative power of love and pleasure.

She is the Goddess Whose Path is Delight. She is the one who entices us to grow in the ways of beauty, love and pleasure.

How to serve Her? Sensuality comes first, and health must come before that. All the routine advice about sleep, nutrition and

exercise becomes sacred duty for Her priest/esses because Hers is a spirituality of the sensual. Think about this: if your path is intellectual and your body is achy or de-energized, the quantity of your work may be reduced, but the quality need not. But if your path is sensual, a body that feel good, has energy and moves freely is a prerequisite. Similarly, you will need a space that is pleasing to all the senses, in which to conduct Her rites.

She is the Lady of living in the moment, and all the ephemeral arts belong to Her. Dancing, flower arranging, conversation, a beautifully set table, all are Hers. These are the pleasures that you have to care enough about to create anew each time. And especially Hers is dressing up, combining art with nature for the purpose of seduction -- but with caution.

All acts of love and pleasure - and no other acts - are Her rituals. Acts of pleasure, of sensuality, are acts that feel good to all participants. To do Her rites, your body must feel good. So, beware of clothing that hurts, binds, or restricts movement. Such clothing induces alienation from the body. No matter how glamorous or sexy it may look, it is not of Aphrodite, literally not Aphrodisiac. The likes of high heel shoes are a blasphemy to Her.

She is the Lady of living in the moment, and of loving the one you're with. She is unowned. Her time and pleasure are Hers to share with whomever She will. She gives what She gives for Her own pleasure and the pleasure of Her chosen partners. What you do in Her name, you must do for the beauty and love and pleasure of the doing, and for that alone. Any ulterior motive -- money, power, prestige, security -- are blasphemies to Her.

And - this is very important - the only way you can share Aphrodite's love and pleasure is by yourself experiencing it to the point of overflow. Altruism, charity are not of Her. Any interaction that you must grit your teeth and bear offends Her.

She is the Lady of living in the moment, and what She is about is intensity. The transformative power of human attraction and contact. And sex is only one of Her options. Requiring sex is no less a blasphemy to Her than is forbidding sex. Her service is perfect freedom, for She tolerates no a priori constraints of any kind. The moments that belong to Aphrodite are moments of intensity of contact, of beauty, spontaneity and love.

And finally I saw it. I don't serve Aphrodite primarily in my bed. In fact, although my sexual connections are plural, they tend to be long-lasting. That quality of in-the-moment intensity, beauty, love and pleasure also fills those moments when I share a person's world in the empathy of counseling. Some of those are single encounters, and all of them are sacred. The Lady of Love the One You're With is the counselor's Goddess, and, on some level, this I have always known.

So, at last, I understand the consecrated women of the temple at Corinth, and those at the older temples of the Fertile Crescent who called Her by other names. Consecrated sex, healing and

transformative, was labelled "temple prostitution" because that's the only way the Greyface culture could understand their activities.

If we allow ourselves to see it, there is plenty of love to go around, not mere sufficiency but abundance beyond our belief. Indeed our unbelief is the only limit. No act that is truly of love and pleasure could ever threaten or hurt. May Aphrodite continue to live in me - now that I've caught Her at it!

So, Rita, here's your resource guide:

Bolen, Jean Shinoda Goddesses in Everywoman New York: Harper & Row, 1984

This is the one that clarified the counseling connection.

Christ, Carol P. Laughter of Aphrodite San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987

A collection of essays. Only the title essay is actually about Aphrodite, but it contains some wonderful descriptions of rituals.

Downing, Christine The Goddess New York: Crossroad, 1984

Again, only one chapter about Aphrodite, but it is very intense. Talks about the risks involved in loving.

Paris, Ginette Pagan Meditations Dallas: Spring, 1986

The best single resource I found. Her section on Aphrodite is over 100 pages long, and very clear about what it means to live out Aphrodite's kind of spirituality.

Qualls-Corbett, Nancy The Sacred Prostitute Toronto: Inner City, 1988

Interesting but frustrating. The chapters on therapeutic applications are very inadequate, especially when compared with Bolen.

There's one more book, that I have not seen, that is cited in all of the books I used. From the things they quote, I suspect it would be worth trying to find this one:

Friedrich, Paul The Meaning of Aphrodite Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1978

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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Welcome to the Harvest '89 ish of PS. Yes, there was no Midsummer or Lammas ish. That's because the first material anyone sent me was Ashta'ar's article, which arrived August 1.

The following account of what I've been up to lately comes from P'APA, where I've been the OE (Official Editor) for two disties (issues): Now that P'APA #45 is snugly in the mail, I can start writing all the news that's already happened. First, I have two snakes. Gibraltar (you remember Gibraltar) is now a year old, 27 inches long last I measured him, and his colors have brightened to mostly orange with tan and gold. Cadiz is a month old. He's an "albino" corn snake. "Albino" corn snakes are correctly called amelanistic: they still have a red pigment called erythrin, so Cadiz is very pink. (Corn snakes with neither melanin nor erythrin are called "snowies".)

I did a Lammas ritual for the CUUPS-LA meeting 8/15 (P'APA #45 deadline day -- rushing from collation to meeting, eating take-out dinner in the car on the way). When I volunteered to do the Lammas ritual, I had an idea what to do, but then I came down with writers' block. I finally made my ritual script the Thursday before the meeting. (My original idea was kind of political, but my actual script was quite traditional (see infra).) I was glad to have a script instead of writers' block, but I was dissatisfied with the script: it seemed so prosaic, like a lecture. Well, it went off satisfactorily at the meeting (despite no rehearsal, everyone reading their lines off the script, missed cues, all the usual). The best part was the altar, with a big round bread Tim baked with a pentacle carved into the top,

surrounded by heaps of corn and champagne grapes. Beautiful. My normal relaxed Eclectic Wiccan rituals are distinctly more formal than the ritual the CUUPS officers have presented so far.

I write of Thursday as if it were soon before Tuesday, because my intervening weekend had not been spent working on scripts. The Pagan part was a five hour meeting with the Crowleys about re-starting Seekers' Circle on Fall Equinox (Seekers' Circle exists to teach Wicca to interested people. It will meet every Saturday until everyone involved burns out, alternating 4 6-week courses of Wicca 101 with 4 6-week courses on different Traditions or Occult Sciences every year.) We copy-editted the material to be mailed to applicants, including the approximately 7 page application form. We made a schedule. We talked money. The room I plan to rent from the West LA Unitarians costs \$25 a meeting. We'll charge \$35 a student for the 6 week course, and hope to break even. How will I break this news to Judy?

(My PSM column, Lammas ish) PROTEAN SUPPLEMENT: A Whole Lot of Questions

Pagan Ethics is one of the topics suggested by the Editors. This is a topic I spend a lot of time thinking about --- at least, I am a Pagan and I spend a lot of time thinking about Ethics. Is that the same as thinking about Pagan Ethics? In my thinking, I've found a lot more questions than answers, so I would like to share my questions with you. In fact, I have already asked one. On to what I had planned to be the first question of this essay:

What do we mean when we say "ethics", "morals", or "morality"? Many people have come up with many different definitions of how "ethics" are different from "morals". Some people say that "morals" are the rules of the society and "ethics" are what is really good or bad. I personally tend to say "ethics", "morals", and "morality" almost interchangeably. My best guess as to what I'm talking about when I say ethics or morals or morality is that I'm talking about deciding whether some behavior is good or evil in order to do more of it if it's good and to do less of it if it's evil.

Which raises the next question: what do we mean when we say "good" and "evil"?

Some people say that good and evil are ideas which were invented (out of whole cloth) by society in order to control people. They said that "good" is whatever your parents praised or rewarded you for when you were little, and that "bad" is whatever your parents punished or scolded you for, and that a free, mature, assertive, human being ignores all concepts of good and evil, judging hisir actions only by the pleasure and profit to be expected from them. In general, I do not agree with this attitude.

(However, there are some cases in which persons in positions of authority (clergy, government, parents) do use arbitrary statements of good and evil as a way of controlling people, and there are people who feel terribly guilty about behavior which hardly strikes me as evil -- divorcing a physically abusive spouse, for example. I just mentioned guilt -- here's a question: what is the connection between ethics and guilt feelings?)

There are other people who say that the goodness or badness of behavior depends on whether it helps or hinders some general principle, such as the survival of the human species, the happiness of the majority, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you", the power and glory of one's native country, obedience to the Bible/Koran/Jim Jones, or the right of the strong to trample on the weak. There is obviously some difference of opinion about which general principle to follow.

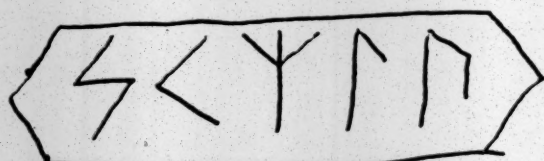
One possibility is the Wiccan Rede: "If it harms none, do what you will". I have heard attempts to derive all Wiccan ethics from the Wiccan Rede. I have heard claims that the Wiccan Rede is just another version of the Golden Rule, as found in most cultures. I have heard claims that the Wiccan ethic of "harmlessness" is inferior to the Christian ethic of "active love". As proponents of the Jewish version of the Golden Rule ("Do not do unto others what is hateful to you" -- Hillel) point out, some awful things have been done to unwilling people in the name of "active love". The usual imaginary bad example is a masochist who runs down the street whipping strangers.

(Not that "harmlessness" is a simple concept either. Since our breathing harms the microscopic critters that live in the air, should we all give up breathing?)

Since so many different general principles have been suggested, I consider that it is necessary to judge the general principles against some even more basic standard of good and evil. Many people have said that God, Goddess, or the gods are the custodians of the basic standard of good and evil. This in turn leads to another question. As Plato's character Socrates asked in the EUTHYPHRO, "Is the good and holy beloved by the gods because it is good and holy, or is the good and holy good and holy because it is beloved by the gods?" (To descend from the abstract to the specific, if rape is bad because Goddess said so, could She change Her mind tomorrow and say rape is good? Myself, I don't think so.)

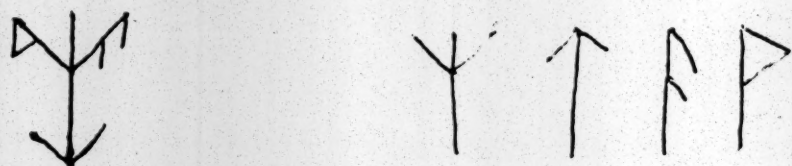
I think it is very easy for most of us to condemn certain actions (not always the same actions!) as bad. We condemn some particular action on what is basically an emotional level, or at most by the action's effect on some general principle which we have accepted on an emotional level. But we have not yet identified a general definition and source of Good and Evil. While there is a consensus among human beings that some things are good (helpfulness to relatives in distress) and some things are not good (picking pockets, especially your pocket), a system of ethics based only on the common consent of humanity is not adequate, because the common consent of humanity doesn't extend far enough. For example, some cultures don't object to rape.

Peschel describes two ways to construct a Runic amulet. The simplest way is to make a "tine" -- a more or less rectangular object bearing a sequence of Runes that embodies the purpose of the spell. This can be worn as jewelry, or placed in your home or car or workplace or whatever. I've only made one Rune tine, so far. It was a healing charm for my son's pet rabbit. I carved the Runes into a piece of carrot and gave it to her to eat! (It seems to be working.)



Design for a Rune-tine

Even more appealing to me, though, is the use of "bind-runes". A bind-rune is a design made by superimposing several Runes, again choosing appropriate ones for the intent of the spell. Since all Runes are composed of straight lines intersecting at simple angles, this is not as difficult as it might seem, and the resulting design is esthetically pleasing as well. Even more than a tine, a bind-rune would not appear obviously "occult" to your mundane boss/nosy relative/landlady.

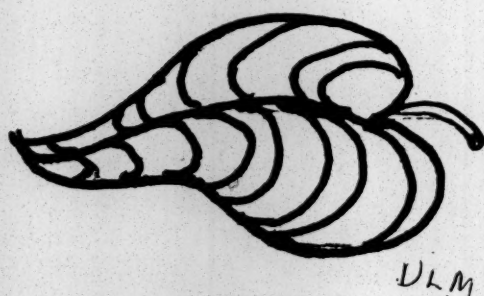


A bind-rune, and its component Runes

Of course, carving a tine or bind-rune in wood is the easiest way to do it, but someone with the tools and skill to work in metal could make a beautiful Runic amulet of silver or copper wire. (Craft jewelry people, take note!). Alternately, Runes can be carved, engraved, inked, painted, etched, or embroidered on all sorts of items.

I've also heard of Runic meditation which involves shaping one's body into the form of a Rune, while chanting the sound and/or name of the Rune. To spell out a spell in Runic by dancing from one position to the next, while singing the incantation, would be a very powerful way to put one's personal energy into the working. (Alas, I'm not supple enough...)

I know there are other books about the Runes, especially several by Thorsson, but I haven't read them yet. Ms. Peschel's book is cheap, and easy to read, and I recommend it highly.



## Learning the Runes

by Ashta'arArthura

The Runes are the letters of an ancient alphabet used by Northern European peoples, and therefore genuinely ancestral to our English-speaking culture. (The antiquity and historical accuracy of the Tarot are debatable; the I Ching is your heritage only if you're Chinese.) In a time and place where literacy was a rare accomplishment, often connected with priest/esshood, written words were perceived as having magickal power. So the Runes were used for divination and magick, as well as for mundane writing.

Several years ago, I received a set of ceramic Runestones, with the book by Ralph Blum, as a gift. I hardly ever used them; they felt unfamiliar to me, and perhaps my attitude was influenced by the negative image of Norse people as bloodthirsty Viking invaders. When I did use the Runes, I was always pleasantly surprised by the accuracy of what they had to say. I also found that I could do readings for myself -- whenever I read the Tarot or the I Ching for myself, I get either warnings of disaster or random junk. Then, just recently, Judy started encouraging us Proteans to study the Runes.

With the usual synchronicity, I went into a bookstore to look for some light entertainment, and found a book about the Runes. It's A Practical Guide To The Runes; Their Uses in Divination and Magick, by Lisa Peschel (Llewellyn, 1989; \$3.95). It is infinitely more readable (and less annoying!) than the Blum book (Ms. Peschel is described as "a Pagan of the Wiccan tradition"). As the title of the book suggests, she explains how to use the Runes for traditional divination, as well as how to construct and charge Runic magickal talismans. She tells you how to make your own Runestones or Rune-tiles, and the cloth and bag generally used with them; she includes information about color symbolism and the traditional applications of woods from various trees.

Using my commercial Runes, I began to work more with Runic divination, with very gratifying results. I've decided to make my own Runestones, as soon as the next gem show provides me with suitable rocks. You can also make Rune-tiles out of wood; the choice of materials is mainly a matter of personal preference. (You need to feel comfortable with your magickal tools!) Considering how well I've been doing with the machine-made clay "stones", I'm really looking forward to using Runes of my own making.

But what interests me the most is Rune magick. Peschel's book provided me with the first really clear explanation of how to make Rune talismans. Because the Runes are letters of an alphabet, they are easy to adapt to various purposes. The spell is generally for something like protection, or healing, or finding someone to love. The usual technique involves carving Runes into a piece of wood, so there aren't any expensive materials or tools to buy.

August 16th, 1989, 11:15 PM

\*

"Once in the month, and better it be  
when the Moon is full..."  
So Aradia commanded the witches to  
call upon her mother, great Diana

Call on Diana, mistress of magicks  
as dogs and coyotes call  
for their mistress, the Huntress  
for their prey, the silver-white rabbit

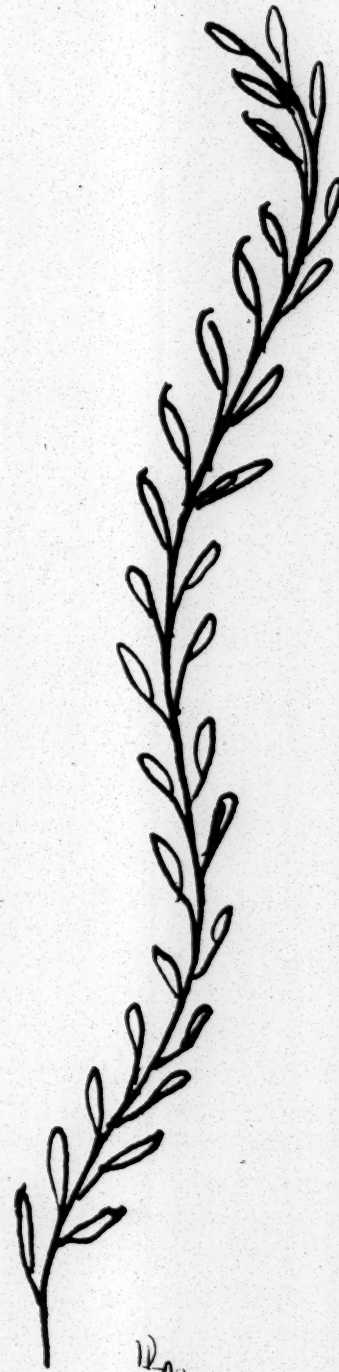
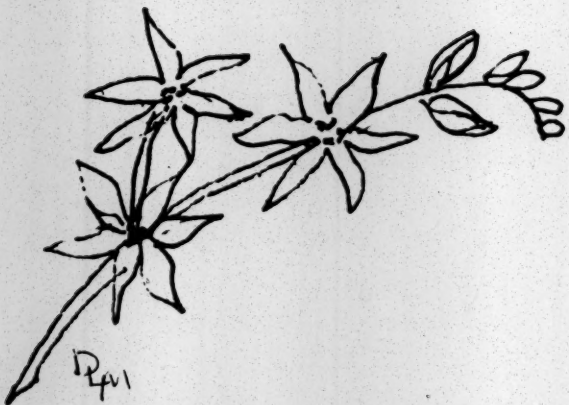
Call on Diana, Lady of the Wild Things  
a chorus of the moon-struck and the lunatic  
howling for the silver coin  
the moon-fruit  
the mirror of night, reflecting back  
the glory of her brother Lucifer, the Sun

Tonight (as rarely happens)  
that glory dwindles;  
the daily diminution  
full to gibbous to crescent  
is recapitulated in a few hours  
as coin turns to copper  
fruit grows ruddy  
the mirror darkens

Call on Diana all that you may  
needful children of Heaven's Queen  
Earth's shadow garbs her as Hecate  
for tonight the Dark Mother's face is seen

Black Lotus

\* lunar eclipse over New York City.



Element Consecrations

P/s1: [hold bowl of salt in cupped hands] Handful of salt, salt of the earth: be at one with all the solidity of earth. Be at one with the strength of the planet beneath our feet. Be at one with the strength of our bones. Be at one with the strength of our patience and skill, that our Circle may be strong, that we may be strong.

P/s1: [hold bowl of water in cupped hands] Handful of water, be at one with all the fluidity of water. Be at one with the depth of ocean and the pervadingness of rain. Be at one with the pulse of blood and the subtlety of tears. Be at one with emotion.

P/s1: [stir some salt into the water] Salt water of the sea, primordial womb of life.

P/s2: [elevate incense burner -- hold it by the handle] Handful of fire, be at one with all the energy of fire. Be sun blaze, forest burn, hearth warmth, gem sparkle, and warm living flesh, that our Circle may be charged with passion, that we may guide our energy wisely.

P/s2:[elevate bowl of incense] Handful of incense, visible air, be at one with the lightness and clarity of air. Heaven above, breath in our lungs, thought and reason and playfulness.

P/s2:[put incense on fire] What descended to earth as sunlight and rain rises again to the heavens.

Scribing the Circle

HP/s:[scribing Circle with athame held next to wheatstalk] I scribe this Circle with a blade and a blade. I scribe this Circle for the rising up of the grain and the cutting down of the grain. I scribe this Circle for the rising up of our lives and the cutting down of our lives.

P/s1:[asperging Circle] Rain for growth, tears for death, rain for growth again.

Ps/2:[censing Circle] Sunlight for growth, fire for autumn leaves, sunlight for growth again.

Invocating the Directions

P/s3:[face East] Spirits of East and sunrise, join our Circle and awaken within us morning, spring, childhood, clarity, lightness, and air.

P/s4:[face South] Spirits of South and noon, join our Circle and awaken within us day, summer, adolescence, brightness, passion, and fire.

P/s5:[face West] Spirits of West and twilight, join our Circle and awaken within us evening, autumn, maturity, intuition, understanding, and water.

P/s6:[face North] Spirits of North and midnight, join our Circle and awaken within us darkness, winter, old age, patience, endurance, and earth.

### Main Part of Ritual

HP/s: This holiday is the time of the beginning of the wheat harvest in traditional European agriculture. The beginning of the maize harvest in traditional American harvest is also right around this time. Seed was planted, sun has shone, rain has fallen, earth has nurtured, and now the fields are lush with green and gold abundance. Harvesters are working very hard to cut that grain, to thresh and winnow, to store that abundance in snug barns as security against winter. At completion of harvest, we will have a thanksgiving feast before winter's rest. We will thank the earth and the sun and the rain, and we will thank the grain spirit.

[here is a chant] (People on Day side of Circle): Earth, sun, rain  
(People on Night side): Thank you for the harvest  
(Day): Autumn's golden grain  
(Night): Will feed us all year

P/s7: In Sumer, the grain and harvest god was Damuzi. We have all heard how Damuzi was the One Great Source of Date Clusters, the water in the barley plants, the energy urging the cattle to mate. He was the husband of Inanna, Queen of Heaven, but he was murdered by bandits on the desert and he was carried off by demons to the underworld. His mother mourned, his sister mourned, his wife mourned, but the only way the Queen of Heaven could get him back for even half the year is that his sister takes his place in the underworld.

P/s8: In Egypt, the grain and harvest god was Osiris. King and culture giver of Egypt, he was murdered by his jealous brother. His wife, Isis, the greatest magician, searched and gathered the scattered pieces of his corpse and brought him back to life by magic. The Egyptian people would put out human silhouettes of burlap sprinkled with seeds before the Nile flood. When the water withdrew, the seeds had sprouted in the soil deposited by the flood. These objects were called "grain Osiris".

P/s9: In Greece, Adonis died. The women planted barley in flowerpots, which soon spouted and soon died in the heat, and called them "Gardens of Adonis". Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, loved Adonis, but it took all her divine powers to get him back for only part of a year.

P/s10: In Greece, Persephone was carried off to the underworld by Hades, God of Death. Her mother, Demeter, the grain mother, went on strike -- the earth grew no food until Persephone was returned. Every year she is kidnapped away again, every year she is returned, and the Eleusinian Mysteries celebrate her return.

HP/s: In Wicca, the grain and harvest spirit is called the Corn King.

[another P/S begins to put ear of corn on chop block on altar]

He is standing tall and proud in the field. His robes are green; his crown is golden corn tassel; his scepter is a wheatstalk. The farmers have cared for him as lovingly as for their own children, watering, weeding, guarding him against crows and vermin. Now his foster fathers go into the fields with scythes....

[CHOP!!!!]

HP/s: Alas! Damuzi dead, Osiris gone, Adonis slain, Corn King cut down in the field by treachery! His mother cries out in grief, his sister weeps, his wife mourns... You mourn also. You remember other griefs: loves lost, hopes lost, plans failed....

[here is an interval in which people mourn]

HP/s: Life flows continually. Life in the earth nourishes the sprouting plants. The plants are eaten by grazing cattle. The cattle are browsing peacefully when suddenly lions pounce, and devour them. The lions die in turn, and their rotting flesh nourishes the soil. More plants grow. Life flows from body to body.

[here is a chant] The turning of the Wheel, the fading of the light  
the turning of the Wheel, the coming of the night  
the turning of the Wheel, the night will pass and then  
the turning of the Wheel, the light will come again

HP/s: Life flows continually, in cycles and eddies but never standing still, and all this exuberance of life depends on eating, killing and eating. Life feeds on death. Life feeds on life. Life is eternally poured as a libation into the sacrificial fire of time, the dancing flames of times. The bread we eat is the flesh of plants, the flesh of the Corn King. The wine we drink is the blood of plants, the blood of the Corn King, and we become what we eat.

[HP/s and another P/s carry bread (suitable for tearing by hand) and red wine, red cranberry juice, or beer to each congregant, saying to each:]

Take and eat, for this is YOUR BODY. Take and eat, for this is YOUR BLOOD.

HP/s: Life flows continually. From the seed of harvest comes the sprout of spring [display green plant].

[here is a chant] Hoof and horn, hoof and horn, all who die will be reborn  
Corn and Grain, Corn and Grain, all who fall will rise again

#### Closing the Circle

[All face outward] HP/s: Spirits of Air, spirits of Fire, spirits of Water, spirits of Earth, we thank you for your presence in our Circle, and ere you depart to your lovely realms, we bid you Hail and Farewell.

[All face inward, take hands]: HP/s: The Circle is closed but never broken. The Circle is closed, but not the love within. Merry meet, and merry part, and merry meet again.



## THE ECLIPSE: WHAT REALLY HAPPENED (Black Lotus)

Shortly after Mnemosynides Coven concluded its August 13 meeting, I was inspired to write a poem which also appears in this issue ("August 16th, 1989, 11:15 PM"). We had discussed meeting for the eclipse the coming Wednesday and the Muse had spoken through me. Any relation between the poem and the reality, however, was tenuous at best.

About a dozen friends had agreed to meet that evening on the upper east side of Manhattan, to have dinner and convene on the roof of Ken Gale's apartment complex to moon-watch. Dinner occurred in two different places, as Ophion and I met in the usual Chinese restaurant, while everyone else met several blocks away. (The instructions were straightforward, but never underestimate my or Ophion's ability to become confused!) It rained all night, and as we waited outside the building for Ken and Company to return, we were propositioned by a very young lady of the evening.

The Moon-watchers finally arrived, furious at our absence from their dinner, and we retired to Ken and Mercy's apartment, which warehouses their combined collection of comics, science fiction, albums, porno, and nature studies. After gorging ourselves on Mercy's home-baked raisin-oatmeal cookies, two gender-divided conversations were going on: the men were talking about comic books (Ken is publishing some independents under the banner of Evolution Comics), while the women discussed New York politics. Claustrophobia began to set in (it's very crowded!) and I suggested we go to the roof.

High above the city (well, five floors high), we could observe the eerie glow of mid-town at night to the south, the towers of Yuppie condos rising all around us, the luminescence of rainclouds reflecting the city's lights -- but no moon. Mercy led us in singing some moon-songs, Ed Banger told me his life story thus far, I attempted to read my poem by mid-town's glow -- all under a featureless sky. Eleven PM approached and people began to leave: next day was a work day. "Too bad it was a wash-out...literally", Dave told me.

As Moon Rabbit and I waited an interminable time for the crosstown bus at 86th St, he suddenly poked me in the ribs: "Look!" There in the sky, to the left of the Yuppie towers featured on the The Jeffersons TV show, was a waning crescent. The occluded part of the moon was not ruddy: it looked like a normal waning crescent, except that the light part was increasing before our eyes. I blushed to observe that there is no "gibbous" phase to an eclipse: the earthshadow moved across the Moon's face in a continuous curve. Our vigil had been rewarded: the Lady just wanted to reveal herself in her own good time.

When I emerged from the subway at 215th St, the eclipse was over. I kissed my hand to the Moon, and trudged on home to bed.

[Here in LA, the night before was clear and the night after was clear, but the night of the eclipse was totally fogged in. - RPM]



PROTEAN SYNTHESIS contains whatever material (by or about Proteans) that Proteans send me to publish. It is published at irregular intervals. It is mailed free to all Proteans who give me their mailing addresses. Having a big mailing list feeds my ego, so be nice and send me your mailing address.

Rita

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A Protean Family Newsletter

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Welcome to the Samhain '89 ish of PS, late as usual. I could try blaming it on a Protean encountered at the Harvest Moon Festival (Oct 14-15) who told me that she had already written an article for PS and would put it in the mail Monday. It hasn't arrived yet (Oct 29) -- maybe Yog-Xipcode ate it. I also met some other Proteans at Harvest Moon, who had not written articles for us. It was nice meeting all of you anyway -- now write articles, or at least Letters to the Editor.

The next Tuesday there was, as you already know, an earthquake in Northern California. Here, 500 miles away, the ground didn't wobble, not even as much as when a truck drives by, but the reporters on KFVB ("all news, all the time") sounded more emotionally shaken than in '87, when we'd been physically shaken. This well reflected the feelings of their listeners -- I think just about every Angeleno has friends or kin in the Bay Area/Silicon Valley. My birth brother and his fiancée are in Palo Alto, my boss's sister is in Sunnyvale, one lady from work was in San Francisco at the time: she'd been at a seminar and was scheduled to fly back seven-ish that evening. I was more worried about Proteans such as John Patrick McClimans and Linda Frankel, and apahacks such as Sheila Wild(th)ing. Despite the gov't and phone company warnings not to phone into the affected area, many disobedient sf fan friends did, and two people kindly called me at work Wednesday to tell me that my brother's ex-roommate had phoned him and verified

his safety, and APA-L member DASher had phoned to verify his own safety and several others' including JP's and Linda's. When I phoned Sheila, her husband answered the phone, but I heard Sheila in the background saying: "Tell her the disty will come out on time!". Proteans who experienced what I prefer to call "the recent unpleasantness" should write an article or a Letter to PS describing it.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday evening I rushed off to the CUUPS-LA meeting with KFVB on the car radio and not yet having received any reassuring phone calls. We had a discussion of the symbolism of the four elements, in which it was little difficult to remember that North can be associated with the stability of Earth, and we raised a Cone of Power to send strength and healing to the quake survivors.

Seekers'-ish news is that we have interviewed two applicants yesterday and five applicants the Saturday before (interviewing five applicants took from 1 pm to 7 pm and was exhausting) and accepted all of them. Next Saturday is the first class, but no one has paid yet and I'm worried about the rent on the building. In my worry, I made eight silk necklaces, in the knot named Double Coin that I learned at a Chinese Knotting class, to sell at Harvest Moon at \$10 each to raise money for Seekers'. Seven of them sold and I got lots of compliments, so I promptly made eight more in hopes of being able to sub-let a corner of a dealers' table at an upcoming Yule Crafts Faire -- but the \$70 has been spent on xeroxing and postage for the applications packages.

## Hot Gardnerian Gossip: the latest from Merrymeet

Most Proteans also happen to be Gardnerians, and most of those have been concerned about the latest attempt of some ultra-conservative Gardnerians to invalidate the Proteus line. The rest of you will please excuse me for a minute while I fill that group in on the latest news, which is good news.

Seems that most of the people involved in the latest Gardnerian controversy just happened to turn up at Merrymeet over Labor Day weekend. Don and Anna were there from California, and so were the majority of the Louisville leadership which had been announcing exclusionary rules. The advantage of meeting in person is that it's much easier for the emotions to be communicated along with the decisions, and so to address what underlies the behavior instead of confronting the behavior directly.

One married couple has for years done most of the work on the Louisville gathering, and, to some extent, they regard it as their private party. The man of that household sincerely - if mistakenly - believes that he would violate his initiatory oath if he stands in a by-the-book Circle with anybody who was not initiated by-the-book. So his very understandable position is that it is unfair to expect him to do all the work to put on a Gathering in which he cannot in conscience attend the main ritual.

The trouble is that, over the years, the Louisville Gathering has by a gradual evolution and through nobody's conscious decision, become the main annual get-together for all Gardnerians. Much as we may want to honor this man's feelings about his work and his oath, we cannot allow the national Gardnerian Gathering to become the property of one faction.

So, starting this spring, there will be another Gathering, this one by intention a Pan-Gardnerian gathering. It will be open to anybody who:

- 1) is of Gardnerian lineage,
- 2) believes her or himself to be working in accordance with the basic Gardnerian spirit and structure, and
- 3) wants to maintain affiliation with the Gardnerian family.

We are hoping that this Gathering will rotate around the country, both to even out the work and the travel expenses and to keep it from ever being seen as the property of any one region or faction. For the first year, our own Dana Morgan is coordinating it - and she'll be letting the rest of us know if there's any way we can help her from afar. Dana also was the key person in the negotiations that made this new Gathering a possibility, and she deserves a great big "atta girl!" for that.

So, one more occasion for at least some of us to get together. See you then!

Judy

Proteans all -- Greetings!

From the depths of cramming for an Algebra exam, a quick pop up for air. Time to say thank you.

When I was forced to re-evaluate my thealogy, a copy of Positive Magic literally landed on my doorstep. Thank you. When I literally didn't know where the next meal would come from, a check landed in my mailbox. Thank you. When I was lost and lonely and scared, in came tapes and phone calls and letters. Thank you. And then came ~~the~~ two miracles ...

Thanks to some conspiracy between Judy & Brian and Barry & Eve, I got to go East between leaving work and starting school. Bless you all -- the vacation & family time were desperately needed.

And thanks to Brian and an "anonymous philanthropist", with credit to the Lady Herself, I am back on-line. The ability to make a living is a wondrous blessing. (She says, hearing Stephen watching cartoons in the living room at this moment!)

So to all who have helped, from sending good thoughts to substantial backing and aid, please accept my gratitude. My wish is for your goodness to shower back upon you multiplied.

We're back on-track now. Carrying 15 hours this term, scheduled for 16 next term. Working 12 hours a week as a Software Evaluator on campus -- look for reviews to appear here from time to time. (Shareware, anybody?) Starvation wages, but the working conditions are great. And Stephen's settled in very well to the on-campus educational child-care center. Growing like a weed (size 8 @ age 4?!?), he's mostly happy and doing fine.

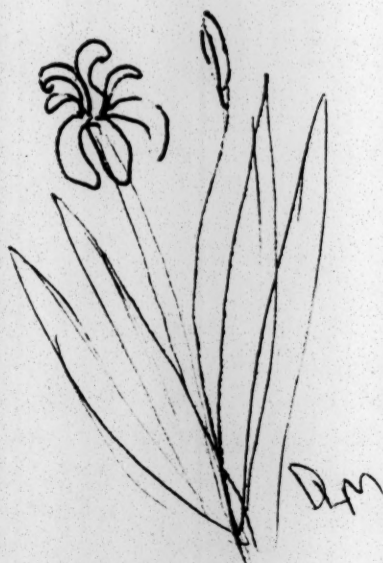
Now that we're back on our feet, we're looking forward to being productive again ... see Announcements elsewhere this ish. Thanks to all of you who helped it become manifest.

Yours --

*Dana*

Dana

7/15/89



## BOOK REVIEW

Luhrmann, T.M.

Persuasions of the Witch's Craft:

Ritual Magic in Contemporary England

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989

This book is going to make you very angry. But put a clothespin over your nose, if need be, and read it anyhow. Despite the fact that the main thrust of the book is an intellectually dishonest attack on the Craft, the book is packed with detailed information that will be especially valuable to all of us whose work it is to teach Wicca to beginning students.

Dr. Luhrmann likes us. She says so repeatedly throughout the book. But she understands us to be amiable fools who have deluded ourselves and each other into believing that magic is real. She describes our rituals and customs as a set of intellectual manipulations. We maintain our impossible system of beliefs because we enjoy the practice, and don't want to face the "fact" that what we do is silly.

Magic is defined as the belief that mind affects matter. All or nothing. Yes or no. And, she informs us, we believe that mind affects matter, at all times, in all circumstances, and uncritically. Do you? I don't. We don't make ashtrays fly across rooms, nor do most of us claim we can. But in fact there is a considerable amount of evidence that mind does affect biological matter, as in healing through visualization, therapeutic touch and the like. But listen to how she dismisses healing magic:

"Many spells are aimed at healing, and inevitably, these spells have a certain success rate, particularly when the patient knows of the magical working. It is said that the spell is more likely to work if the patient knows of the working...." (p. 129.)

Well, yes, that's what's known as the "placebo effect." For many years medical researchers regarded the placebo effect as an annoying distortion of their experiments and tried their best to eliminate it. Then somebody finally realized that by means of the dreaded placebo effect, people sometimes get better without drugging or surgery - or iatrogenic side effects.

It's a benefit, not a problem. Of very recent years, there is even a fledgling scientific discipline called psycho-neuro-immunology, which is the experimental study of how the mind ("psycho") working through the nervous system ("neuro") affects the immune system ("immunology"). Yup, a whole new science built around the placebo effect.

She seems to think that we embarrass very easily. In fact she seems to believe that many of our traditional practices are designed to save ourselves from the mortification of hearing counter arguments that we are unable to answer. For example

traditional Craft secrecy. Here's her interpretation:

"Keeping the magic secret separates the magic from the non-magical, but still allows magicians to move between these disparate worlds with ease. Doing so allows magicians to insulate their claims from skeptical criticism -- both other people's and their own. Magicians can hold their claims in secret without ever subjecting them to scoffing outsiders. They can think of themselves as believing in magic, and get on well both in a magical context and within their everyday world, without ever putting their secretively held ideas at risk...." (p. 251.)

Dr. Luhrmann seems to be unaware that we face risks considerably more substantial than the risk of cognitive dissonance. At least her discussion of secrecy never mentions that some of us have lost our jobs, or the custody of our children. Nor does she at any time even consider the traditional reason for secrecy, which is to restrict teaching to a one-on-one or small group context, so that skills are only imparted to students who demonstrate the maturity and wisdom to use those skills well.

I'd love to live in a world where only those who truly appreciate the forest, in both ethical and aesthetic terms, are ever taught how to run a bulldozer. And that's not because there's anything embarrassing about bulldozer operation.

Dr. Luhrmann then goes on to devote an entire chapter to our assertion that magic operates on a different plane from ordinary reality. Here, too, the only explanation she even mentions is that the two plane description is a ploy to protect ourselves from hard intellectual challenge. Here's her description:

"...it allows magicians to give a technical explanation for magical efficacy which actually entails the impossibility of full rational understanding of its ritual. The unconscious is irrational, and magic lies in its domain. Magic becomes part of a different context, something separate from a rationally comprehended materialism. The term "inner plane" carries with it this freedom, this sense that it is not important to give a rational explanation of the magic. Rationality, after all, is what the conscious mind is good at. Linked to psychology and its authoritative figures, the metaphor of a separate plane is a magician's intellectual resource that dispenses with ordinary canons of truth...." (p. 282.)

Double bind time, kindred. First she says we delude ourselves by believing that mind effects matter. Then, when we consistently tell her that our rites are primarily about the inner plane, she tells us that this is nothing but an intellectual evasion. The notion of the inner plane, it seems, is the main way in which we cheat.

Well, actually, it is the main way in which Dr. Luhrmann cheats. Her chapter about the inner plane makes no reference to the large amount of recent psychological work on alternate states of consciousness, work that is now leading to serious discussions of state-specific sciences and state-specific epistemologies. Neither does she consider the ethnographic data from cultures around the world describing the experience of mystics and shamans with otherworld journeys. It seems that both refer to non-rational - but still very important - functions of the human mind. And yet Mircea Eliade and Charles Tart both appear in Dr. Luhrmann's extensive bibliography. And after willfully omitting such relevant material, she calls us "disingenuous." Really.

Dr. Luhrmann apparently considers herself to be a scientist. I wish she'd act like one. In my opinion science, and not Cabala, is the true "Yoga of the West," although many people misunderstand just what science is.

Science is not a body of dull facts and numbers to be memorized, no matter what they told you in High School. And science is not our enemy. Science never was. The word "science" is derived from the Latin scire, "to know," which, not incidentally, was Gerald Gardner's pen name.

Science is a process, not a body of content. It is a method for pursuing knowledge, and the heart of that method is a commitment to always value experience over theory. Whenever observation contradicts theory, that theory is thrown out. No matter how comfortable you may be with the world view it supports, and even if it is the basis of your career. So the people who finally decided to study the placebo effect, for example, were the true scientists in that story. The ones who for years tried to eliminate the placebo effect from their experiments were willfully stupid.

Scientism is not science. Scientism is striking a pose in the style of the mechanistic science of two generations ago, and deriding whatever fails to fit the image. For example, it can be the insistence that only that which is physical is real, a piece of nonsense that led a generation of "psychologists" to deny the reality of the human mind. It could be a refusal to even examine people's own reasons for doing what they do, because The Anthropologist knows better than the ignorant native. Or it can be an insistence that "coincidence," however unlikely, is a more satisfactory explanation of events than rituals that marshal our energies and focus our minds on our goals. You might say that scientism is a parody of true science.

But even though Dr. Luhrmann uses the most simplistic kind of scientism, plus some few intellectual dirty tricks to distance herself from us, she is not our enemy either. Here lies the paradox of this book. For this woman, the Door into Faerie opened twice: once in childhood, as it does for all, and again in the summer following her college graduation, when, by her own admission, she came across a copy of The Spiral Dance, and was "hooked" again. (p. 18.)

Fieldwork for her PhD in Anthropology (from Cambridge University in England) gave her the opportunity to live in London doing nothing but studying magic. She had full time to read books, practice and meditate, attend classes and rituals, take correspondence courses. She was initiated into several of these groups, including the coven that had once been Gerald Gardner's. In short, Dr. Luhrmann had an opportunity most of us would envy, and she did not entirely waste it.

For her description of the process of training, of what exactly the student learns and how, opened my eyes to a whole new perspective that is sure to benefit my own students. What she does is to break down for us the training of a specialist in any field: surgeon or auto mechanic or Witch.

The first thing that happens is that the student's perception changes. S/he learns to make subtle distinctions, observe things that went unnoticed before. (Medical students have tapes of the many different ways the human heartbeat can sound, so they learn to hear diagnostically relevant differences.) A common knowledge base makes the specialist's perception meaningful, and often a highly specialized vocabulary permits the sharing of such knowledge. Structured learning experiences are provided, steps towards competence are monitored, and teachers or senior colleagues give correction and encouragement.

And the heart of the book, chapter after chapter, is a detailed analysis of how this procedure is applicable to the learning of magic. Very good and very, very useful. She's got it, form and feeling. And, before you get worried about the obvious, let me say that whenever she quotes from a ritual, she footnotes it to a printed source. It is her good descriptions of what we do within her analysis of how any specialist is trained that makes this book so very valuable to any coven leader, or any teacher in any magical or spiritual tradition.

So what kind of person can at the same time get it so right and so wrong? A person deeply conflicted, but at least able to tell us from where the stress comes:

"The only reason I continued to think of myself as an anthropologist, rather than as a witch, was that I had a strong disincentive against asserting that rituals had an effect upon the material world. The anthropologist is meant to become involved, but not native. ... I stood to lose credibility and career by adherence. Throughout my time in magic, whenever I felt magical power inside the circle or wanted to say that a ritual had 'worked', I chalked up the event as an insight into the field.

In other words, the process of becoming involved in magic makes the magic believable, and makes explicit belief in magical theory quite tempting unless there is a strong disincentive against it." pp. 320-321.)

That's an amazing passage. The world of magic was open to Dr. Luhrmann, even up to the point of initiation into several groups, although she was completely candid about being an anthropologist. But she suspected the academic world of being closed to a Witch. If she's correct about that, and I suspect she is, I don't at all like what that reveals about the dispensers of officially sanctioned knowledge in our times.

And so, completely dropping the open minded attitude of real science, she denied the validity of her own felt experience rather than risk her career. But even so, something inside her made her tell the world why. I puor si muove, indeed.

With this realization, for me, the anger turns to pity. And this for comfort: the Door into Faerie is never locked. At any point, in any life, it will open to one finger's pressure. Heart's delight can lead us there; ambition never could.

Judy Harrow  
9/12/89

#### OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presenting Coven Northgate, the newest Gardnerian offshoot of this line. The contact address is Box 211, Big Rapids, MI 49307. Geographic region thus far sweeps 200 miles, and covers the southeast corner of Lake Michigan.

Two projects in the works ---

- seeking information on dysfunctional covens, with an eye to learning their symptoms, causes, and possible treatments. Presently called the "mindfuck file", Judy is compiling the data.

- seeking information on HP burnout, same parameters as above. We kinda know what happens with the HPs, but what happens to the HP? I'm compiling the data for this one, to the Box above or to the home address.

Anybody with stories or thoughts to share on either subject, please do. This is presently for in-house use only, tho it is reasonable to guess that extracts will eventually appear here and in other Pagan journals. Your confidentiality can/will be respected. Any contributions are welcome.

---- Dana Morgan

Hi, everybody. I "won" the election for Official Editor of PAGAN APA. An APA is an Amateur Publishing Association, a written form of network resembling a many-to-many or a round robin. Members write a contribution every two months; then all the members read and discuss all the contributions. Members pay for their own printing and postage.

If you think you might be interested in joining P'APA, write to me asking for a sample copy. It would be nice if you included two bucks for postage. My address: Rita Prince Winston, 548-3 Venice Bl, Venice CA 90291.

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My topic this ish is the Natural Elements Art Gallery. You probably think it's the Santa Monica Beach, but the Santa Monica city council has funded several art projects about "sand, sun, wind, and water" which are displayed there. Natural Elements all right, all Four of them.

The first is the Santa Monica Art Tool, which lives in a chain link enclosure a few yards west of the parking lot on the west side of the Santa Monica Pier. It is a giant concrete roller, sculpted like a cookie cutter: when dragged behind a tractor, it rolls out a sand castle city with skyscrapers, freeways, starfish and seaweed. According to the artist, part of the art event is for people to fling themselves upon the sand castle city, thus destroying it. Otherwise, the waves will wash it away.

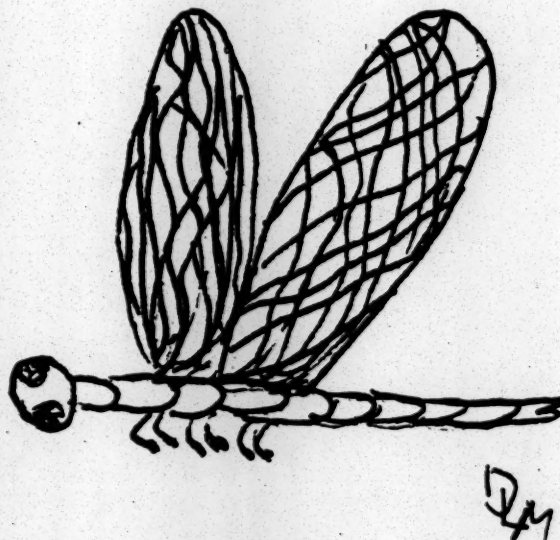
Santa Monica Art Tool roll-up occurs at 9 ayem on selected Sunday mornings (and is announced under "Events" in the Calendar in the LA WEEKLY).

The Art Tool clearly is associated with the Element of Earth.

The second project is the Singing Chairs, which relate to Air. These are two giant chairs (one blue, one green) about a block south (east) of the Santa Monica Pier and several yards oceanward of the Promenade/Boardwalk/Ocean Front Walk. You can climb a short ladder (about my height) to sit in a Singing Chair. Reasonably comfortable.

What makes it Sing is that there is a wind organ, a set of tall organ pipes, attached to the back of each chair. On a day with a light breeze, they produce a low hum, hard to hear over surf, seagulls, boomboxes, automobiles, helicopters, and construction a block away. On a day with a brisk breeze tearing beach towels out of people's hands and tossing around the flags on the lifeguard stations, the Singing Chairs produce a clearly audible, remarkably varied, and unexpectedly pleasant array of sounds.

The third sculpture is the Solar Web. This is a metal spiderweb or jungle gym, which has been designed to have solstice alignments (it annoys me that they didn't take the trouble to add equinox alignments). I feel that this relationship to the Sun is a relationship to Fire. The Solar Web should be under construction as you read this.



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A Protean Family Newsletter  
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This is the belated Beltane '90 ish of PS. We're late because I didn't feel like typing for a while: it is not the fault of the contributors, all of whom got their material in on time.

There are two beautifully typeset pages this. Alexei's article is, as before, from AnGael, while the Ishtar hymn and Purim article are from ENCHANTE: The Magazine for the Urbane Pagan.

Aidan Edward "Ned" O'Ryan-Kelly was born 3/21/90 at 11:44 PM. Baby, mother, father, and big sister all doing well.

This Midsummer is the 10th anniversary of Proteus Coven. They'll celebrate 6/30, so as not to interfere with either FSG or the Gay Pride Parade.

Caitrin Baer, "oldest daughter" of Merydedd Harper, sent two rituals, and also wrote: "I'd like to comment briefly on the article in the previous issue by Eluki bes-Shahar. I've been working on a project for several years that has led to me to read a lot of books on history and mythology. And among my conclusions are these: We don't and we can't know all aspects of how Goddesses and Gods were worshipped in ancient time, and that each individual already has their own personal concept of Deity which can't be decreed by anyone else, and that trying to limit the vastness and complexity of God/dess is like trying to put all the wonders and terrors back in Pandora's box."

Ashta'ar also sent a reply (infra). I want to admit that I agree more with Eluki than with Caitrin and Ashta'ar -- Eluki agreed with me about a lot of things that she seemed to think that she was disagreeing with me about. A number were quite trivial: I am NOT a priestess of Aphrodite (if I were, I

wouldn't be seeking one to do rituals for me), I thought it went without saying that the spiritual value (life-energy) of animal sacrifice is just as primary as the practical value (eating meat), and I don't think my rituals are worthless.

I believe that every goddess and every god is an individual (and they are real and exist outside me and not are 'just archetypes'), as is every woman and every man. As I am not Eluki, so Aphrodite is not Yamaya and Yamaya is not Demeter and Demeter is not Gaia and neither Aphrodite nor Yamaya nor Demeter nor Gaia is the Lady named the Goddess of the the Witches. There are portions of the Gardnerian liturgy which hail Her by a litany of these other names. I believe that this is a rhetorical way of saying that our Lady's glory is more than the glory of all these other ladies put together. A vulgar analogy is a politician calling his candidate a Solomon of wisdom and a George Washington of patriotism.

Dion Fortune popularized the saying: "All gods are One God, all goddesses are One Goddess, and there is one Initiator." As poetry, it's lovely. As prose, it doesn't work so well. People who try to say that Aphrodite is Demeter are like the Jungians trying to achieve the Great Goddess archetype by mooshing together all the other goddess archetypes. They end up with a Great Hodge-Podge instead of a Great Goddess, and it is this Great Hodge-Podge which I was mocking with phrase "generic Great Goddess"; certainly I would not mock our Lady!

Burning candles and incense to Aphrodite, pouring libations of wine and oil and honey, making offerings of cakes and flowers and barley (I didn't think of barley until Eluki mentioned it) is

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not sufficient to pay a debt. When I spoke of a 'material object', I meant a stained glass mirror of a mermaid or a silver and pearl brooch in the shape of a scallop shell. The Ancient Greeks neither destroyed such offerings (vandalism) nor preserved them for human use (selfishness): they put them in the Treasury of the deity. Does anyone know the address of an operational Treasury of Aphrodite somewhere I can go without a passport?

I agree with Eluki that I belong to the Goddess of the Witches by my initiation oath. (I can't speak for other people's secret initiations.)

But I disagree very strongly with Eluki about what She demands of us. I've never heard Her say: "I am a jealous Goddess, and you shall have no other goddesses in my sight." I've never heard in history of any PaleoPagan culture where worshippers of one deity were forbidden to worship other deities in their spare time.

So, folks, what do we owe Her? Moon and Sabbat rituals? Sticking to the received Gardnerian liturgy with no changes? Environmental activism? Low-fat, low-calory diets and aerobics (look at the initiation ritual printed in THE SPIRAL DANCE for "all between my hands belong to the Goddess", with "all between my hands" being literally the whole body)?

#### PROTEAN SUPPLEMENT for Litha-Lammas '90 PSN by Rita Prince Winston

PSN often has articles about plants and gardening by people who know about plants and gardening. People who have dirt to put plants in. All I know is, one of the many ways in which my current apartment (I moved May '89) is better than my previous apartment is that the balcony gets sunlight. Besides a windchime in the shape of a busty blonde mermaid, I bought a lot of plants and put them in pots on the balcony. My roommate waters them and gives them fish emulsion (which smells AWFUL), and some of 'em die and some live. Every day when I get home from work, I go out on the balcony and feel really proud of all the green things which are bigger than yesterday or have more flowers, or I feel really worried about all the green things which are turning brown or losing their flowers.

In the winter, a friend spoke of his intention to plant tomatoes. This reminded me so strongly (hungrily) of my late grandmother's delicious homegrown tomatoes that for Yule, my friend gave me a packet of cherry tomato seeds, a windowbox, and a book about growing tomatoes. I put pansies in the windowbox and planted the tomato seeds in a little plastic greenhouse on my dining room windowsill. Out of 28 seeds in the plastic greenhouse, I have eight plants on my balcony (they get tomato food instead of fish emulsion); seven in eight-inch pots, and the one in a five gallon pot is twice as large as the next largest. Every spring day I come home from work and look at them and say proudly: "My beautiful tomato jungle." Then I say hungrily: "Where are all the little red tomatoes?"

I planted and transplanted them earlier than the garden show on the radio advised, but timing turned out well for the Sabbats. At Candlemas, holiday of beginning and first shoots, we blessed the first three or four sprouts in their greenhouse. At Spring Equinox, holiday of greenery, we blessed several transplants in their pots on the balcony. As I write, it is barely the second half of April and there are yellow flowers and already a dozen tiny green tomatoes on my jungle, so I hope to have the first ripe tomato for Beltane. There is a lot to be said for the cliché that every Witch should tend a plant, as a vivid experiential reminder of the Green World origin and meaning of the Sabbats.

Besides welcoming spiders to eat bugs off my plants, I have been honoring Arachne by putting my attention into my crochet hook instead of into spinning words. (Arachne is the spider goddess of weaving and spinning, who is honored by needleworkers even tho' she was defeated by Athena in a weaving contest.) Yule, birthdays, baby showers. Afghans, sweaters, baby blankets, baby clothes. This is a Witchy piece of magick, to create a new thing which never existed before; to create a real, three-dimensional thing out of mere one-dimensional yarn. Everyday life is full of Witchy things if you look at them right.... Come to think of it, "the illusion of reality" could refer to the illusion that boring, mundane, non-magical reality is boring, or mundane, or non-magical.

# The World of Celtic Mythology

by Alexei Kondratiev



## The Coming of the Gaels



When (the Book of Invasions tell us) the Sons of Mil, ancestors of the modern Gaels, first came to Ireland from Spain, they found the previous inhabitants of the island, the Tuatha De Danann, opposing them with awesome sorceries that at first prevented them from landing at all. The Danann-folk had learned magical arts during their travels in fabulous lands, and it had become a part of their nature. Together they represented a full paradigm of all the activities a human community could possibly engage in, raised to a supernaturally perfect level. Their three rulers, Mac Cuill ("Son of Hazel"), Mac Greine ("Son of the Sun"), and Mac Cecht ("Son of Plough"), were idealizations of the three occupational classes the Celts thought to be necessary components of their society: the druids and bards, the warrior-aristocracy, and the farmers. All three were consorts of the Land-Goddess who, acknowledging their kinship with her, responded to their needs. So it was that the Irish coast took on the smoothness and roundness of a "hog's back" to repel the invaders; and all manner of winds, fogs and floods were invoked to further impede their progress.

But one of the Sons of Mil, Aimhirgin, was himself a druid and bard of spectacular accomplishments. He possessed the gift which is the essential source of bardic power, the ability to match words with truth. Setting his right foot on Irish soil, he intoned a chant which displayed his thorough knowledge of the sacred patterns of time and space, and thus established himself as a being of power with links to the divine world. Then he addressed the Land of Ireland herself, praising her natural features, treating her as a person. With this new contact, some of the hold the Danann-folk had on Ireland slipped: the Sons of Mil were able to land on the island, and began to make inroads against their enemies.

Aimhirgin's eloquent appeal to the personal reality of Ireland, however, was to have much more striking consequences. Eventually the Land-Goddess of Ireland appeared in human shape to make a pact with the new arrivals who, through the intermediary of their bard, had won her favour. This, in accordance with the Celtic belief about the triadic nature of reality, requiring every phenomenon to go through a threefold process before it can be truly manifest, happened three times in three different places. First the Goddess appeared in Sliabh Mis as Banbha, and granted the Gaels sovereignty over the island if in exchange they would henceforth always call it by her name. Then she appeared to them in Sliabh Eibhlinne as Fodla, and secured the same agreement. Finally, at Uisneach on the plain of Meath, the sacred ritual centre of the whole island and the future home of the Irish High Kings, she came to them as Eire, the highest sovereignty-goddess of the triad, and her name has re-

mained attached to the land ever since – though not exclusively, for Irish-language poets have always remembered the two previous pacts, and have always called their country Banbha and Fodla as well.

Although Uisneach would remain a place of great religious importance right up to the period of Christianization – the place where the druids of Ireland had their principal seat – it was soon joined and rivaled by Tara (Teamhair), reputedly named after Tea, a daughter-in-law of Mil who chose that spot as her burial site. There the High Kings, heirs of the Sons of Mil, would come to reside and receive the tribute of the provincial rulers, though without ever eclipsing the prestige of Uisneach, which was felt to perform a necessary function in maintaining the spiritual integrity of the land (the two sites were, in bardic terminology, like "the two kidneys in one body"). With the interaction between these two ritual poles – Uisneach symbolizing the eternal continuity of Ireland-as-Goddess and Tara being the focus of the temporal Gaelic order – the Celts of Ireland maintained an active relationship with the Island Aimhirgin had first wooed in their name, and based their right to inhabit the land on the stability and warmth of that relationship.

This type of personal relationship with the land, imagined as a goddess, is at the origin of every Celtic community and is a fundamental element of Celtic tradition. It was impossible, for the early Celts, to think of the land they lived on as an inert material that could be shaped and exploited at the whim of human settlers. The land's nurturing quality – especially that of the rivers which flowed through it – conjured up images of a maternal being, boundlessly giving to those who truly loved her, but capable of being hurt, and of withholding her generosity from offenders. Tribal groups took great pains to initiate a proper ritual interchange with their land-goddess, following a pattern like that of the myth of Aimhirgin. They married one of their number – their king – to her so that recognizable kinship ties were established, and maintained the balance of the relationship throughout the yearly cycle by appropriate seasonal observances.

Even after Christianization, foreign invasion, and massive social and economic changes had considerably diluted the native Celtic ideology, this personalization of the land – and all the emotions attendant on it – retained a powerful hold on the imagination of the people. After the Battle of the Boyne and the final collapse of the Gaelic social structure under colonial oppression, Irish poets eloquently conveyed, in the outrage and pity of their *aisling* -visions, the abuse the sovereignty-goddess was suffering at the hands of invaders who had no concept of her existence. And when the Famine terminally sundered tribe from land and sent millions away across

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## Handfasting Rite

a grateful tribute is paid here to the verbal inspiration for this rite, the Oath of the "Free Amazons", as written in "Shattered Chains" by Marion Zimmer Bradley; and to the humyn one, MJH/Bright. Caitrin Baer/Nimue 3rd

Officiating ps and p cast circle, call elements as appropriate for the season, the nearest sabbat, etc. The handfasting is the "work" to be done. This rite was written specifically with two women partners in mind, but it can be aligned to work with two men partners or mixed gender partners. Some gender exclusive language will need to be changed for the last two cases.

Life partner:

Today, for all to hear and see,

I give up my right to wed another, except in this manner:

Today, I acknowledge,

for all to hear and see that, (name)

is my Life partner;

and I show this by sharing with her/him

Love,

(speaking partner kisses quiet one)

Nurturance,

(speaking partner gives a small piece of bread, then finishes it herself)

and Warmth,

(speaking partner gives a lit candle, and holds it with other)

Not for the first time, and not for the last,

I acknowledge, for all to hear and see, that (name)

is my lover, my significant other, my closest friend, my lady/liege

And so s/he will be, as long as s/he freely chooses.

From today, I swear no lover binds me against my will,

that I give myself only in my own season, of my own free will, and my own desires.

I owe allegiance only to the laws of my heart,

and laws of the land, when my conscience permits

I swear that (name)

is to me as sister/brother, daughter/son, friend, lover,

and that with her/him I will always share

Love

(kiss, mutually this time)

Nurturance

(instead of bread, whatever special food has been provided)

and Warmth

(use candle to light fire)

For all to hear and see I give my oath,

to (name), to you present, and to God/dess. So mote it be!

next partner repeats this sequence,

alternatively, if they wish to, the partners might echo each other.

ps or p gives a blessing,

partners bless cakes and wine,

circle continues.

# Silver Circle

Words & Music by Fred Kuhr

♩ = 100

C D7 C

With - in our sil - ver cir - cle, Ring of liv - ing

D7 C D7 C

fi - re; Cir - cle rise a - round us, Po - wer rise with -

Bm G C

in us in our song. Some - thing stirs with -

D7 Bm G C

in us, old and strong. Whis - pers low, we

D7 Bm G Am7 C

know that we be - long here. With - in our liv - ing

D7 C D7 C

cir - cle, Ring of sil - ver fi - re, Cir - cle rise a -

D7 C D7 Bm G

ro - und us, Po - wer rise with - in us in our song.

Bb G

We raise our song to - ge - ther, words of po - wer for a

Bb G

A ring of life and light on high.

Bb G

Cir - cle ris - ing round us, reach - ing out to join

A D7

That star - ry spi - ral in the sky.

C D7 C

With - in our sil - ver cir - cle, Ring of liv - ing

D7 C D7 C

fi - re; Cir - cle rise a - round us, Po - wer rise with -

D7 Bm G C

in us in our song; The force that lives with -

D7 G C

in us, old and strong. She whis - pers low, we've

D7 Bm G

known her all a - long.

Continued from p. 3

the Atlantic, never to return, the separation was, for many, a traumatic one. Students of the Irish emigrant experience – most recently, Kirby Miller in **Emigrants and Exiles** – have at times commented disparagingly on the attachment of some first-generation Irish to their land of origin, their bitterness at the loss of their roots, their unwillingness to assimilate quickly and abandon their ethnic identity. One could just as easily recognize these traits for the strengths they are, strengths that are part of the Celtic heritage and have sustained Celtic communities when cultural and economic attrition threatened them with extinction.

Perhaps even today, despite centuries of acculturation, enough of that feeling may remain in the hearts of Celtic people, to be fanned back to life and action at the sight of the Celtic lands so poorly treated, their resources plundered without planning or regard for the future, certainly without love.



WORDS OF POWER.....by Songwolf

I am a witch.

Not a Gardnerian, or a Neo-Pagan (though I am also both of these) or any of the other polite euphemisms to describe-me-without-describing-me. I am a witch. And it hurts me to have my name, my self, and my identity made the subject of sniggering low-brow humor and gross misrepresentation.

But maybe you don't see it that way. I didn't.

A while back in the Neo-Pagan community, which includes witches as well as non-witches, a letter was circulated. It was a letter from a well-known producer of TV and Movies, sent in answer to letters sent by many of us expressing concern over the anti-witch aspects of an upcoming project of his. It is to be made from a book already in print, so we were all well aware of the content and the subject of this project. I do not wish to mention his name. I respect him and his work, and in his letter he responded to our concerns with dignity and grace. It is no intention of mine to make him the particular scapegoat for my discussion. This matter extends far beyond one film, one book.

But it was his reply that started me thinking, because in it he said that while he was aware of our concern, the witches he was portraying in his film were witches of fantasy and folklore, and that in essence they had nothing to do with us. And for a while I thought "How nice he took the trouble to reply", and went away satisfied.

But it is not all right. He will portray the witches in his film as ugly and evil, frighteners of children and practitioners of evil magic. I am a witch. I am not these things.

But this film is not about me. It is about these fantasy witches. These fantasy witches have nothing to do with me.

This is not true. It is not acceptable.

The popular conception of a witch, from fantasy and folklore, that people like this producer think is "Okay" to show, is me. The stereotype was created to defame and propagandize against the religious observances of a specific group of people -- the Western European practitioners of a non-Christian religious practice called Witchcraft. This false and distorted image was shaped from the actions and religious beliefs of my ancestors for use as a tool of propeganda and persecution, and it is time that this defamation stopped.

It is not enough for those who portray those unrealistic fantasy witches to say that they don't mean me, when they show hags in pointy hats working evil magic. It is a meaningless and specious distinction. The witch stereotype is anti-religious propeganda directed against a specific group of people. Its existance hurts us. Its continuation cannot be justified by arguments that it is old, or that its users do not mean modern witches when they create their works of entertainment. These excuses would not protect them from charges of defamation from any other religious group, and they cannot be applied here.

Yes, I am calling for censorship -- self-censorship. The same sort of censorship that bars offensive stereotypes of Blacks and Jews from the mass media. Stephen Fetchit and Shylock are no longer considered acceptable. It is time for The Wicked Witch of the West to join them.

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I feel compelled to respond to Eluki Bes Shahar's article, "My Heretic Heart", because I disagree so strongly with her about which deities are ours to worship. First, let me state that I know Eluki, and I like her. We've been in many Circles together, including some she's run and some that I have. None of this should be taken as a personal attack, and I will endeavor to disagree without being disagreeable.

To begin with, we need look no farther than the Gardnerian Book of Shadows itself. In the Charge of the Goddess, She refers to Herself by a long list of names from Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Celtic, and other European mythologies; She also states that She is the Goddess of the Witches. Who are we to contradict Her? Her consort the God is less clearly self-defined, but He is called by many names out of similar European pantheons. So our deities tell us plainly that They are known to us by many names, but they are our Goddess and God.

If you accept the Book of Shadows as the sacred teachings handed down in secret from before the Burning Time, the internal evidence should be convincing enough by itself. But some Witches believe that the Book was consciously constructed by Gerald Gardner and his friends, as an attempt to create a workable system of rituals based on ancient folklore and mythology. These people were all well-versed in ceremonial magick, folkways, and comparative religion, and they drew upon all these sources in their efforts to form a cohesive magickal system by synthesizing many diverse images. This type of syncretism strengthens, rather than invalidates, the religious experience; for example, there are detectable traces of Isis-worship and Mithraism in the Roman Catholic Church.

Now I will argue from my own personal theology. I believe that the Source, the "God beyond the gods", is just too big and abstract for us humans to comprehend directly; we have to conceptualize it in symbols. I choose to think of it as a dyad, because the observable universe seems to be organized mostly into dualities, from "up" and "down" spin of subatomic particles to mammalian sex. So it seems logical to use symbols like Yin and Yang -- or Goddess and God. In turn, each member of the dyad can be likened to a crystalline gem with myriads of facets; each individual facet refracts the energy from the Unknowable Source in a slightly different fashion. So (taking the Goddess-jewel for an example) we experience the energy refracted from the Aphrodite facet, or the Isis facet, or Yemaya or Kali or Kwan Yin or Pele. But it seems very unwise indeed to say, "I will choose to experience only the energy refracted from these few facets, and consider any other facets invalid." Why limit yourself that way? (Of course, if you're lucky, the energy from some facet you don't acknowledge will grab you by the scruff of the neck when you're not paying attention, and force you to accept the validity of Coyote or Indra or Izanami.)

Many people have come to the Craft through Paganism, and many Pagans were pagans first. At a very early age, they found more meaning and more emotional intensity in the Gods and Goddesses of some ancient pantheon than they did in the mainstream religion of their birth. Their first experiences with the Lady and Lord came as Isis and Osiris, or Artemis and Apollo, or Freya and Thor. Are these people "not really Witches"? I'm also reminded of a conversation with our former High Priest; I confessed that I still had a lingering dislike for Christianity, and he replied, "Well, I consider myself enough of a polytheist to include Jesus." Was he "not worshipping the Gods of the Witches"?

This is not to say that it is perfectly all right to pick a god, any god, and call it Witchcraft. If you pick a deity out of some obscure pantheon while leafing idly through a dictionary of mythology, without context or careful research, just to have a more impressive "Godform of the Month" -- well, you can go suck a crystal; you're not a Witch. But if you feel a powerful emotional response when you hear the name of a particular deity; if that Goddess or God haunts your thoughts and drives you to research Her or His history, symbolism, and worship in depth, then you have to accept that that facet of the jewel is aimed at you.

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Outer Court Circle/Caitrin Mahony Baer/aka rs 12/17/89

Traditional order of circle is blessing elements, calling quarters, casting circle, circle work, cakes and wine, grounding-sacred nonsense, "dismissing" quarters, taking up circle.

This circle will follow the traditional order in practice, despite its current arrangement on the file. This circle is not intended to be formally G'dnerian, but neither is it heterodox according to my understanding. cmbrs/Nimue

BLESSING THE ELEMENTS:

\*Priest/ess offers water to the gods, raising water bowl from the altar to her arms length and back to altar, saying:

BEGINNER OF ALL, BEGIN OUR RITE  
WOMB OF ALL, CLEANSE THIS SITE  
MOTHER OF ALL,  
THIS PLACE, THESE CHILDREN ARE YOURS,  
CARRY US WARMLY, SAFELY, SURELY,  
LET US FEEL,  
OCEAN MOTHER, DEEP FATHER,  
WASH US IN YOUR LOVE.

Priest/ess now mixes 3 measures of salt into water and offers salt and water bowl as above, saying:

SAVOR OF LIFE, FLAVOR OF EARTH,  
MIX WITH WATER, TASTE OF BIRTH  
VANISH, YET REMAIN WITHIN,  
SHOW US MYSTERIES YET TO WIN  
SHOW US WHERE WE ALL BEGIN  
SEAL OUR CIRCLE, SEAL OUR HEARTS,  
LET US TOUCH,  
EARTH MOTHER, DARK FATHER  
NURTURE US IN YOUR DEPTHS.

Priest/ess lights charcoal with taper or candle and offers it to the gods, as above, then places it in the censer, saying:

GIFT OF LIGHT, SUN-BRIGHT GIFT,  
BURN AND GLOW, DEVOUR AND REMAIN,  
DIE DOWN, BURST OUT AGAIN,  
UNDYING SUN, LIGHT OUR WORKING, BURN OUT FEAR,  
LET US DESIRE,  
SUN FATHER, BRIGHT MOTHER,  
WARM US IN YOUR GLANCES.

Priest/ess now adds 3 measures of incense to the coal and offers it to the gods as above, then places it on the altar, saying:

FORCE OF WINDS, RUSHING SWEETNESS OF BREATH,  
MELD WITH FIRE TO SEAL OUR CIRCLE,  
MOVER OF TIDES AND TREES AND FIRES,

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MOVER OF HAWKS AND OWLS AND WRENS,  
MOVER OF BREASTS AND HEARTS AND MINDS,  
LET US UNDERSTAND,  
STORM FATHER, UNSEEN MOTHER  
MOVE US WITH YOUR THOUGHTS.

Calling the quarters:

In the east: The priest/ess lights quarter candle, envisioning  
hir personal deities for east, air, intellect  
S/he then says aloud:

POWERS of AIR ATTEND US, RULERS OF AIR PROTECT US.  
(slowly brings arms up and out to left and right so that on welcome  
the gesture is complete)  
HORUS, DECHTERE, TANIT, LLEW,  
GUARD OUR WORKING, JOIN OUR CIRCLE,  
COME NOW AND BE WELCOME!

Circle members respond: COME AND BE WELCOME!

repeat this pattern with appropriate changes in south, west, and  
north.

i.e. TARA, OLWEN, APOLLO, THOR, (fire, will)

CREDDYLAD, PERSEUS, SARASVATI, KHENSU (water, feeling)

CHANGING WOMAN, ASHERAH, HERNE, TAMMUZ (earth, sensation)

The priest/ess completes the quarter call by silently  
addressing the eastern quarter to make the circuit whole. The  
priest/ess officiating at the circle, or the one calling the  
quarters may choose to employ different god/dess names for each  
circle, depending on the intent of that ritual.

Circle Casting:

High priest/ess takes her athame or coven sword from the altar  
and moves to eastern quarter. As she does so, circle members pass  
first the combined salt and water, and secondly the censer,  
starting in the east, sunwise to one another until the circle is  
whole. at that point, hps and hp (officiators) are saluted with  
salt/water and incense. (in the vernacular: "splashed and smoked.")

HPS: (walks sunwise, drawing circle as she walks)

I CAST THIS CIRCLE WIDE AND STRONG,  
I CAST THIS CIRCLE TALL AND BRIGHT,  
BE A WOMB OF GODDESS, BE A HOME TO GODS,  
I DRAW THIS BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE WORLDS,  
I DRAW THIS PLACE OUT OF SPACE AND TIME.  
JOIN AIR TO FIRE, WATER TO EARTH,  
JOIN WATER TO EARTH, FIRE TO AIR,  
CAST AND CLEANSE, SEAL AND LIGHT,  
JOIN EAST TO SOUTH TO WEST TO NORTH,  
JOIN MIND TO WILL TO HEART TO HANDS.  
LIGHT AND SEAL, CLEANSE AND CAST.  
MY MIND BUILDS THIS CIRCLE WITH WORDS,

MY WILL DRAWS THIS CIRCLE WITH LIGHT,  
MY HEART SEALS THIS CIRCLE WITH LOVE,  
MY HAND SHAPES THIS CIRCLE WITH STRENGTH.  
THIS CIRCLE IS CAST AND CLEANSED,  
THIS CIRCLE IS LIT AND SEALED,  
THIS CIRCLE IS A WOMB OF GODDESS,  
THIS CIRCLE IS A HOME TO GODS  
AS I WILL, SO MOTE IT BE!

Circle members respond: SO MOTE IT BE!

The work of the circle begins here, which can include invoking the gods, but only when appropriate. After the work of the circle, whatever purpose the group has for gathering tonight, has been completed, a period of grounding the energy raised begins with what is traditionally called cakes and wine

Traditionally the hp holds the cup of wine, the hps lowers her athame into it and draws the pentacle in blessing. then the hp draws a pentacle in blessing over the cake.

BLESSING THE WINE AND CAKES:

WINE:

HPS: JOIN WATER TO FIRE, JOIN LOVE TO WILL

oblation is given to the gods, hp offers cup to hps saying:

BLESSED BE THEE!

hp and or circle members pass cup around circle, responding in turn: BLESSED BE!

CAKES:

HP: JOIN AIR AND EARTH, JOIN MIND AND FORM

ablution is given, hps offers piece of cake to hp, saying:

BLESSED BE THEE!

hps and circle members pass cake around circle, responding in turn, BLESSED BE!

There are no set rules for the rest of the circle, with the exception that, until the circle is taken up, everyone is addressed with due respect and BY THEIR CIRCLE NAMES, NOT BY THEIR EVERYDAY NAMES. this is still a place taken out of space and time. when the hps or hp notes that grounding has been accomplished to the point of every day matters entering the conversation or otherwise indicating that the focus has been lost, someone is appointed to dismiss the quarters:

starting in the east:

FOR GUARDING OUR CIRCLE, WE HONOR YOU,

FOR JOINING OUR RITES, WE THANK YOU

POWERS OF AIR, POWERS OF MIND, WE WELCOME YOU,

AND IF YOU MUST RETURN TO YOUR SHINING REALMS,

WE BID YOU HAIL AND FAREWELL!

(circle members respond: HAIL AND FAREWELL!)

to be repeated at south, west and north quarters with appropriate changes.

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At this point the hp or hps gives a traditional blessing, this is the first one I learned and my favorite:

hps:

In the name of my Mistress, the fair One, the Three fold One,  
I bless you with the power, and with coming and going  
each to each, everlasting, eternal and illuminated,  
Be Blessed!

For taking up the circle itself there are a number of much used formulas. this circle will employ the following traditional chant:

FIRE, SEAL THE CIRCLE ROUND,  
LET IT FADE BENEATH THE GROUND,  
LET ALL THINGS BE AS THEY WERE,  
SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME.

The hps or someone appointed for the task, carries hir athame about the circle, starting at the east quarter, reciting the verse, the circle members recite it after hir, as a round. just as with casting the circle, picking it up starts in the east, travels sunwise all the way around back to the east quarter.

Traditionally at that point the hps declares:

THE CIRCLE IS OPEN, THE GODDESS BLESSES HER CHILDREN!  
MERRY MEET AND MERRY PART, AND MERRY, MEET AGAIN!



\*Author's note: In almost all cases, excepting, traditionally and in this case, cutting the circle, the tasks to be done in this outer court circle can be done by any circle member. To keep members focused on what's going on, its been suggested that elemental blessings and quarter callings be parceled out, depending on how many minds and bodies you have present. For example, one person could do one elemental blessings, leaving three more for three others to do, the same with the quarters. BUT, it remains the task of those circle members who are not physically doing something right now, to focus on the intent of the circle, the work to be done in circle, the sabbat or season or esbat being celebrated. Centering and focusing on the circle, taking oneSelf out of time and place as the circle itself is taken is the "job" of each member. No exceptions. Exams, groceries, laundry lists, employers, phone calls and all other everyday considerations are put aside with everyday clothing. cmbrs

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The Gods limit Themselves, or not, as They choose, and it is not our task to limit Them. And the Gods choose Their worshippers according to Their own logic, which is not the same as ours. I am a Witch, and if Quetzalcoatl or Oya should demand my worship, I'll still be a Witch.

And so will you.

## A GRAMMAR OF MAGIC.....by Songwolf

Back in the days when Magic was widely practiced, rather than just talked about, there was, as can be expected, a comprehensive technical vocabulary to describe the various practices of the Mantic Arts (from a Greek root which also gives us Mania: god-possessed, divinatory). Much of this specialized vocabulary has been been lost, and of the survivors in common usage today, few are used with any sense of their actual and original meaning.

Nonetheless, it is not a difficult task to restore them, and any person with a taste for old fairy tales and an O.E.D. could duplicate my research to provide the rectified definitions given here.

-a CANTRIP or CANTHRIP is a spoken magic, usually in the form of a short verse or couplet. Sometimes referred to as a spoken charm.

-a SPELL is written, on parchment or anything else that will take an impression, and, as the name implies, is spelled out, letter by letter, in an alphabet where each letter has a magical power and personality, such as Hebrew or Runic. That you usually CAST a SPELL may reflect a tradition of flinging the letters to the ground to activate their magical power -- a construction that survives both in CASTING the runes and CASTING a horoscope (in this later sense, 'to cast' seems obviously derived from 'to shape').

-a GLAMOR (glamour, glamorie) is a magic cast against the sight or perception of the victim, in order to delude by magic. The word comes from the Scots, which retained much of its magical vocabulary until quite late, and comes from the same root as to GLAUM, or see. A GLAMOR obscures the true nature of a thing; what the victim sees is an infinitely alluring illusion. It is interesting to note that even in its mundane use today the connotation of an unreal beauty or desirability remains.

-a CHARM is crafted, from a collection of physical objects. It is superficially similar to an AMULET or TALISMAN (q.v.), but is of a shorter duration, and once 'triggered' it is inert and cannot be recharged. Originally a CHARM was a sung (as opposed to spoken) magic; the blended song of birds was also at one time referred to as a charm. CHARM made its transition from a sung magic to a concrete object when it became identified with love. A charm was a love magic, and the word became transferred to the physical components of the spell. Its varying meanings survive in the collection of small objects that decorates what we call a CHARM BRACELET, and also in the adjective CHARMING.

-an AMULET is a passive/protective physical object worn or carried on the body to avert a happening or a specific class of happenings. It has long-term efficacy, and may require recharging, but generally it does not need replacing.

-a TALISMAN is an active/causative physical object generally but not always carried on the body. It causes things to happen and confers 'power' (mana, baraka) on the holder. Talismans can be transferred, and the power usually but not always is inherent within the object and not put there by the creator. Talismans are often identified with Touchstones, although the reason for this is unclear.

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-a TOUCHSTONE, while not strictly a magical object, has the connotation of proving (that is, testing or dispelling) the presense of glamorie or ensorcellment (from SORCERY q.v.). Historically, the touchstone is of quartz or black basalt; it was used as it is today to test (prove) the purity of gold. Objects which carry a magical GLAMOR in order to decieve (such as fairy gold) revert to their natural state in the presence of a Touchstone, although the Touchstone carries no magical charge itself.

-the term SORCERY is used today as a catch-all for all active and passive mantic practices. It is derived from the Latin SORTILEGE, meaning the casting of lots, and may apply equally to divinatory practice or to the common Classical World practice of choosing an acceptable sacrifice by lot. The chosen victim (see Frazier's GOLDEN BOUGH) is frequently presumed to have magical powers between the time of his choosing and sacrifice.

-to HALLOW is to render holy or sacred by use and inclusion in ritual. The word also applies to the object as well as the process -- cf. All Hallows Eve -- in its modern version, All Saints Eve. The Twelve Treasures of Britain are referred to in many old manuscripts as the Twelve Hallows; one is tempted to draw a connection between the ritual treasures and the grave-goods buried with the dead who are also venerated on this day. A 'hallow' is not a consecrated object; an object can be hallowed or consecrated, not both.

-an ENCHANTMENT is a chanted magic, longer than the CANTRIP. Enchantment is often coupled with GLAMOR (q.v.) in the popular usages as: the casting of an enchantment or GLAMOR over a person or place.

-an INCANTATION is the same as an ENCHANTMENT -- or to be precise, you ENCHANT somebody with an INCANTATION. The word has the connotation of summoning (to INVOKE, q.v.) a Power or Entity -- by means of a long speech or prayer -- which then accomplishes the desire of the ENCHANTER.

-to INVOKE (from the Latin INVOCARE, to call) is to draw power from above and without.

-to EVOKE (EVOCARE, to call forth) is to draw power from below and within. EVOKATION has the connotation of rousing something that is already present.

To be SPELLBOUND is of course to be under the influence of a SPELL. If you're BEWITCHED a witch may have had a hand in it, but it also indicates that you have been turned aside from your course of action (WYK, the Indo-European root-word of both WICCA and WITCH, contains the meaning of 'to turn aside'), and to ENTRANCE someone is self-explanatory. Of course, with time and chance all these fine shadings of meaning have fallen into abeyance, so that we can speak of charms, amulets and talismans as interchangeable objects and a famous modern witch can write the phrase 'Chant the Spell and be it done' with no sense of incongruity.

Incidentally, the most likely reason that 'Spell' has survived as the catch-all word for the exercise of the Art Magical is because for a long time in Christian Europe the information was transmitted in writing -- the GRIMOIRES, or BLACK BOOKS. The word GRIMOIRE is actually Medieval French for 'grammar' or 'primer'.

Words strictly outside the scope of this article, but included

for completion's sake, are the foreign borrowings FETISH (also fetch), TABOO (also tabu), TOTEM, and SHAMAN. While never having had a place in the technical vocabulary of north-west European magical practice, they are worth defining exactly because of their widespread use (and epistemological drift) in the Neopagan community today.

FETISH (also Fetich, Fetch): Brought into English in the 16th century, it is an English adaptation of a French transliteration (the word they came up with was FETICHE; [to contain] charm or sorcery; probably from the same root as FAIRY) of a Guinean word meaning, roughly 'a skilfully contrived artificial object which is the subject of worship'. The word originally carried the corollary meanings of 'to adorn' and 'to practice magic'. FETISH has come to mean an object compulsively carried or act compulsively performed, and has made a mundane transfer to sexual abnormality (shoe fetish, leather fetish). In this use too it retains the connotation of the power-object; the power conferred in this case is sexual potency.

In the Hoodoo (as distinct from Voodoo or Voudon) practice of the southern United States, a FETCH is a non-physical familiar, conjured by and bound to the Fetch Doctor (compare with Witch Doctor, Spirit Doctor), which does its master's bidding. The FETCH (the corruption of FETISH seems obvious) may be the 'soul' of a deceased human, a minor spirit or elemental, the spirit of an animal, or a part of the conjurman's life essence.

FETCH is also a (linguistically-unrelated) Northern England word meaning spirit, haunt, or apparition. In this connection it has the connotation of psychopompos, or conductor of the dead.

TABOO (also tabu): A Macronesian word which entered English in the 18th century, meaning sacred or consecrated. Almost immediately upon coming into English it was simplified to mean 'forbidden'. People, places, or objects can all be declared TABOO, i.e. untouchable except by proper persons properly prepared. The word has acquired no technical Neopagan meaning; when used non-technically in English (social taboos, taboo words) there is a suggestion of uncleanness about the taboo object which was not originally a part of the meaning of the word.

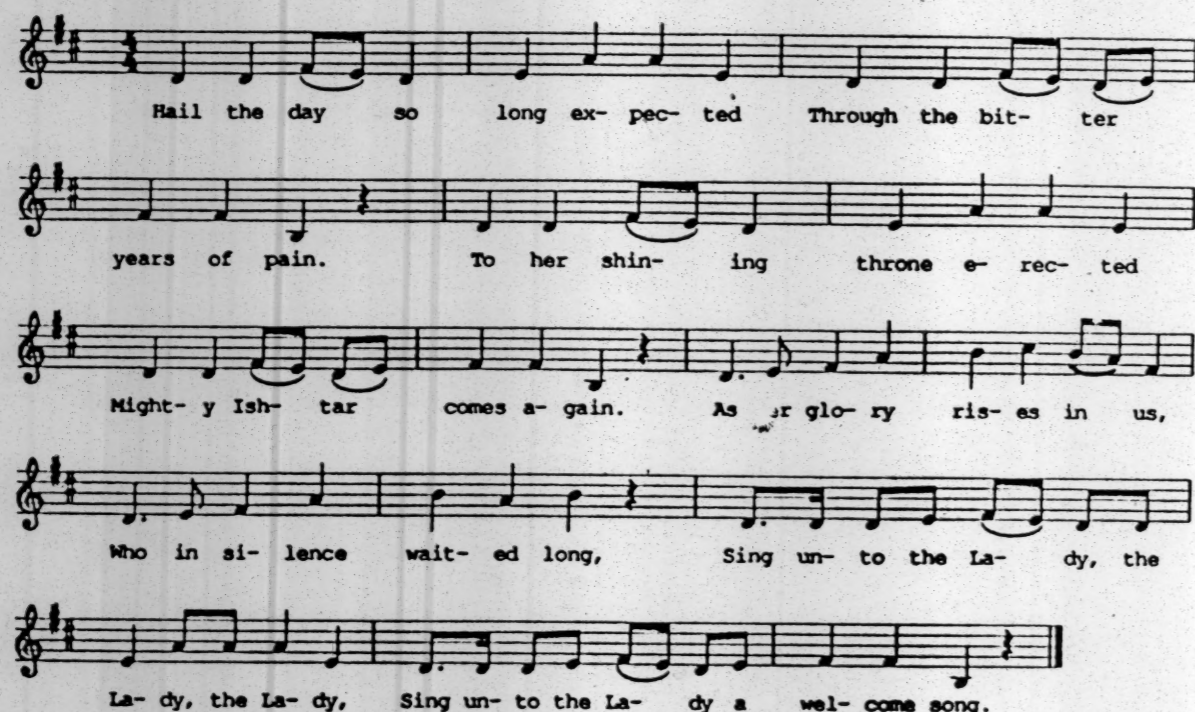
TOTEM: An Algonquin Indian word introduced into English in the 15th century. In its original use, a familiar spirit held in common by an extended family group. The modern meaning has broadened to include an animal or non-living object taken as an emblem and symbolic representation of a group or person, in order that the powers or virtues of the totem object may be magically transferred to the possessor.

SHAMAN: Possibly originally Chinese or Russian; brought into English in the 1600's in reports sent home by travellers in Northern Asia. The original meaning seems to be spirit-doctor or spirit-dancer; the only English meaning of the word is to denote an aboriginal magic-user. As such, the word has been transferred to non-Asiatic cultures: it is perfectly correct to speak of North American shamanic practice, for example, and the Druids of Celto-Iberian Gaul have been cited by many experts as practicing shamanic techniques -- i.e., inducing knowledge and conversation of the spirits by use of ecstatic techniques.

ECSTASY comes from the Greek root EKSTASIS, to drive [oneself] out of the body [and into the realm of the gods], which brings us full-circle to the first word defined in this essay: Mantica, or Magic. At root all mantic operations are attempts to communicate directly with the gods. From 'the casting of lots' to 'the calling down with songs', the methods whose history is recorded in the English language are as various and similar as the peoples who have worshipped.

# A Hymn to Ishtar

by Judy Harrow

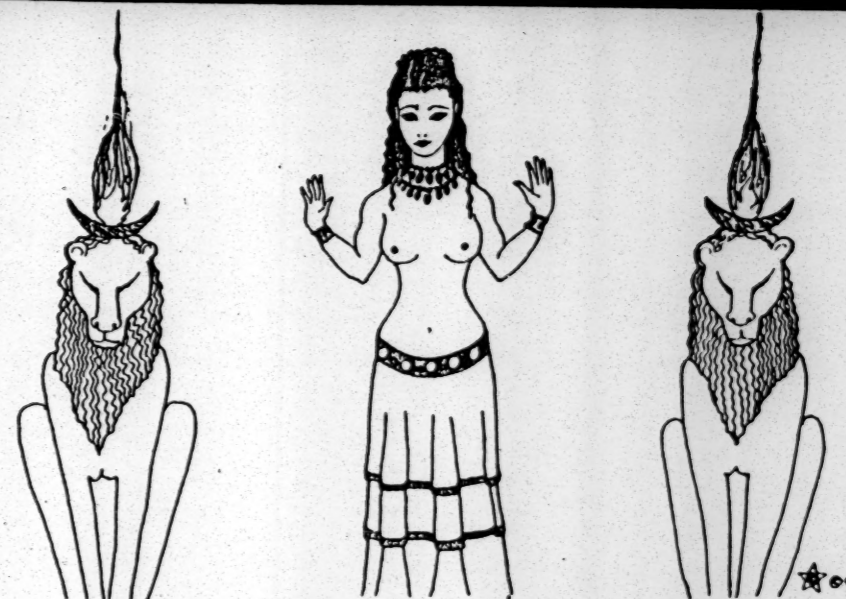


Hail the day so long expected  
Through the bitter years of pain:  
To Her shining throne erected  
Mighty Ishtar comes again.  
As Her glory rises in us,  
Who in silence waited long:  
Sing unto the Lady, the Lady, the Lady,  
Sing unto the Lady a welcome song!

Now behold the dawning wonder  
As the beauty of the past  
Bright as lightning, strong as thunder,  
Comes again at last, at last!  
Raise your voices, man and woman,  
Child and elder, weak and strong:  
Sing unto the Lady, the Lady, the Lady,  
Sing unto the Lady a welcome song!

In the old ways now we praise Her,  
Pour to Her the honey wine,  
Burn sweet incense on the brazier,  
Bake the moon cakes for Her sign.  
To the drumbeat dance before Her,  
In procession joyful throng:  
Sing unto the Lady, the Lady, the Lady,  
Sing unto the Lady a welcome song!

New lyrics to an old tune (the hymn, *Babylon is Fallen*), copyright 1989 by Judy Harrow on behalf of the Lady's people. These words may be used and circulated freely. They are only copyrighted to prevent anyone else from restricting them in any way.



## The Purim Story

Purim is the last Babylonian national holiday much celebrated nowadays. It was the spring holiday, the celebration of the renewal of fertility, when the King of Babylon ascended the great ziggurat to the temple of heaven on its summit, and Ishtar, Queen of Heaven, was drawn down into a priestess, and brought to the king by a priest who had drawn into himself the god of the city, Bel-Marduk. And as the king made love to the goddess, wedding himself as the representative of the people to her as the personification of fertile Mesopotamia, the whole town went wild: New clothes, fruits and wine, orgiastic celebrations broke out everywhere. It was a totally joyous occasion.

The Jews found it irresistible.

The Jews were carried off to Babylon in 586 B.C.E. by Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed Jerusalem and the truculent little kingdom of Judaea. By the waters of Babylon—the Euphrates, to be exact—there they sat down, yea they wept. But they got over it. By the time Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon and gave them permission to return to Judaea and rebuild their Temple, few Jews wanted to go. Babylon was the New, Improved Jerusalem—forerunner of New York.

And though some Jews did go back and rebuild, most did not. They remained in Babylon, ruled by their native princes of the House of David, and spent their idle hours codifying their Book and writing commentaries upon it—the Talmud. This went on for a very long time—in fact, until the Mongols erased Babylon some eighteen centuries after Nebuchadnezzar.

Inevitably, local influences crept into Judaism. You can detect them in the Books of Daniel and Job, of Susannah and Esther. Especially the *megillah*, the Book of Esther.

Because after five centuries of celebrating Purim just as enthusiastically as the Babylonians did, somebody went to a learned rabbi and said, Why are we doing this?

And the rabbi thought fast and abstrusely (it's what they do best) and came up with:

There was this Jewish girl named, er, Esther, and her, er, uncle, Mordecai, and he gave her to the king of Babylon, Ahasuerus (Ahasuerus is usually taken to be Xerxes of Persia, the last king of Babylon—whose independence he crushed—to perform the sacred copulation). And Esther saved the Jews from the persecutions of Haman (see below).

And the Jews, greatly relieved that there was nothing pagan or idolatrous about this, went back to celebrating the rites of Ishtar, as they had been celebrated forever.

One liberated woman told me, "You put on new clothes and send baskets of food to everyone you know, and then you read the Purim story at dinner, except nowadays we don't just hiss Haman and cheer Esther; we also cheer for Vashti [*Ahasuerus' first wife, executed for not following his orders*]."

Foods especially favored at Purim include hamantaschen, "Haman's hats," which are three-cornered pastries, the sides folded over on a dollop of lekvar, which is Hungarian prune jam and the finest of all fruit pastry fillings. But a Jewish pagan priestess last Purim, having baked a batch, presented them at a sky-clad ritual, saying, "They call these Haman's hats. But they're not hats." And she lowered her arm until the juicy, tricorn pastry mimicked part of her anatomy.

So hamantaschen are a very pagan thing to do, and Ishtar will be delighted if you eat them in her honor.

And a man raised by a rabbi grandfather told me, "It's the great kids' holiday, because you listen to the *megillah*, and you cheer and boo and act silly when the proper names come up. And you're supposed to get drunk—very drunk. So drunk, they say, that you cannot distinguish good from evil—which is a rabbinical way of saying impossibly drunk. Because there is no level of intoxication at which the righteous cannot distinguish good from evil."

Nonetheless, even the righteous should not drive while in this state. ★

—J.Y.

# More Rune Poems by Ashta'ar Arthura

17



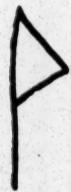
Kenaz

Everything enters when you open up:  
Birth of blessings, blazing bright:  
The force of friendly flaming fire:  
Love in your life, like the link's light.



Gifu

Sharing, yet still separate selves,  
Person to person in partnership paired:  
Both giving and getting gifts will gladden:  
Sweet the sensation when something is shared!



Wunjo

Fortune finally favors fulfillment:  
The soul has sought the Self's success:  
Just rejoice and jump with joy!  
After high hope, happiness!

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A Protean Family Newsletter  
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This is the Ostara '91 ish of PS. I found Protean family gossip in the Spring '91 HARVEST, which reported: Margot Adler gave birth to a boy in December 1990; Valerie Voigt gave birth to a girl, Cara Astarte Lee, on the evening of Feb 7, 1991.

Thish has four\* letters about the Trad thing. As usual, I think that all the writers are right, except that I as an individual feel a personal need to separate myself from the anti-Judaism in Brightshadow's letter. I like Judaism. I also like tribalism -- from my point of view, "this whole problem" is caused by my reluctance to leave the Protean tribe and be cast out into a lonely, new Winstonian Trad. BTW, I also think that the ultraconservatives have a right to ~~have~~ an ultraconservative tribe of their own, and do u-c rituals and u-c gatherings and u-c zines and be u-c together, if that's what makes them happy. I don't just believe in the right of consenting adults to do things that I don't want to do; I believe that diversity in the Craft (for example, having a whole range of covens from ultraconservative to ultraeclectic) actively serves the Gods.

Meanwhile, my mailing list for PS has increased to 53 addresses. The Yule '90 and Oimelc '91 ishes were 19 pages each and thish looks to be 17 pages. It costs me \$54 to photocopy 53 copies of 19 pages, and 62¢ (at the new postal rates) a copy to mail 19 (or 17) pages: that's \$32.86, according to a borrowed calculator. From the Yule ish to now, I received a total of \$40 in donations. I am very grateful for the donations, but I still find that I am spending a lot of my own money on this project. I hate begging for money (it's so humiliating) but this is a hint.

What really bothers me is that I might be spending my money to mail zines to addresses which Proteans moved away from years ago, where the current people just throw out our precious words. What I WANT to do is rebuild the mailing list from scratch, by asking everyone to send me a postcard with their current mailing address for PS. I think postcards are still only 19¢ postage.

SEND A POSTCARD WITH YOUR MAILING ADDRESS UNLESS YOU WANT TO BE DROPPED FROM THE PS MAILING LIST.

I have a few lines to fill. On Saturday (March 9), I went to a UCLA Extension program on the Vikings. The lecture (and pictures) of building authentic replicas of Viking ships was so good it made me want to build a Viking ship of my own! Another lecture dealt with ship burials. Excavations indicate that ship burials reached their peak in the 3rd century C.E., which was before the Viking era, and included people so poor that their only grave-good was a piece of a ship. The lecture was very complicated, but the conclusion seemed to be that the ship was the symbol of fertility gods (what we would call Vanir), representing their departure in fall and return in spring, and the ship burial represented the worshippers' hope of rebirth (like the grain gods). The lecturer showed a slide of a tombstone with a ship carved on it and an otherwise identical tombstone with a Christian cross on it, and indicated that this was a simple one for one substitution: the symbolism has the same meaning.

\* five

2

Dear Protean Family:

I've read, reread, and mulled over Rita's and Judy's letters to PS #23 for weeks now. It seems to me that there are two separate issues being discussed (not in any particular order):

1. Is "Protean" a Tradition within the Wiccan religion, and if so how should it be defined;
2. Are "Protean Gardnerians" real Gardnerians.

First, is "Protean" a Tradition within the Wiccan religion? I feel that yes, it is. However, I define this Protean Tradition as consisting of: anyone who has experienced an initiatory, cross-initiatory, or some other type of bonding ritual (i.e. a sister coven ritual) with a Priest or Priestess who can trace their initiatory, cross-initiatory, or some other type of bonding lineage to Judy Harrow. Members of the Protean Tradition can be members of other Traditions, but are not required to do so; and that all members of the Protean Tradition, while they may share many things in common in their religious practice, must adhere to the magical ethic, "we do not work magic for anyone without that person's express consent." I'll admit that this is a vague definition, because I want our definition of "Protean" to be as inclusive as possible.

I do not believe that defining the Protean Tradition has any bearing on the Gardnerian question, it is a completely separate issue. There are Proteans, Gardnerian Proteans, Faery Proteans, Mycotan Proteans, ad infinitum; I happen to think that this diversity is one of our many strengths. Yes Rita, if you wish to define yourself as a member of the Protean Tradition and join the UWC board as the Protean representative, by all means do so.

Secondly, the great Gardnerian controversy: are Protean Gardnerians real Gardnerians? Yes, most emphatically YES!!!

The changes that Lady Cleindori and the Proteus Coven made to the ritual practices of the Gardnerian tradition can be defended on numerous grounds, some of which are:

1. All of the changes instituted within the Proteus Coven were made with Queen Lady Morveren's knowledge and consent. This practice is in keeping with the tenets and oaths of the Gardnerian Tradition.
2. The theological reasoning behind the changes is sound.
3. The psychological reasoning in support of the changes is beyond reproach.
4. When Gardner created the rituals, he did just that. He created rituals to meet his own spiritual/sexual needs, stealing/borrowing anything that worked from whatever sources he could get access to. In order to do as Gardner did, we can not simply re-enact his rituals; we must meet our own spiritual/sexual needs, stealing/borrowing anything that works from whatever sources we can get access to.

Do all Gardnerians agree with this argument? No. There are Fundamentalist Gardnerians who seem to believe that the rituals that Gardner wrote must always be worked the way he wrote them. Neither side of this argument will change their mind, and so we are at an impasse.

Will there be a schism? Yes. I firmly believe that I am a Gardnerian, that I practice the tradition in accordance with my oaths. I identify myself as a Gardnerian High Priestess, and I will continue to do so. I do not recognize that anyone within the tradition has the authority to expel me from the tradition. I will not abdicate that authority to anyone. Therefore, regardless of what anyone says, I am Gardnerian.

I do not feel that continuing this debate of definition any longer is worthwhile. (Granted, I've never written to the Hidden Path, but I've been a part of the debate, burning up the phone lines between CA and NY.) We will never change the minds of those who hold the opposing view; and they will never change mine. So, let's do something more creative and productive with this energy and simply stop arguing.

I suggest that we let the Fundamentalists have Louisville, the Hidden Path, and the other Path publications. We can get on with the business of being Gardnerian, calling ourselves Gardnerian, and channeling our energies into those projects that each of us is called to. There are more important things to do than continue to beat our heads against closed minds.

So, finally, Rita I'll support you in your decision to join the UWC board as a Protean if that is what you decide to do. I pray that the Protean Tradition will continue to grow, change, and attract the seekers who wish to grow and change. And for those of us who are Gardnerian our challenge is to continue to be Gardnerian, in whatever way we see fit, as long as our Queen says, "Okay."

Blessed Be,  
Julie O'Ryan

Dear PS,

I attended the Pacific Coast Gardnerian Gather last Summer, representing Proteus, & was welcomed by all despite a certain chip-on-the-shoulderness: I'm from Proteus, I said -- which is not the most orthodox of Gardnerian groups. They tittered. [Lady Deirdre, without even hearing the name, would say to all: I'm from Louisville, but it's not my fault.] And it was a wonderful weekend, 40 brainy people accepting their differences & enjoying them. There were four rituals, no two remotely alike. I observed many different ways of working & met terrific folks.

I wouldn't want to not be in this family. I dislike my ancestral Judaism partly because it's a tribal faith, a faith that preaches separatism. Look at Samuel, Elijah, Mattathias: Xenophobes. I like an inclusive faith. I like the expanding Circle, like the necklace we create at Proteus events.

Yeah, they're making it tough [a few of them], but I vote we stay in as long as we can & with whomever we can. N.B.: Enchantè has just been accepted as a swap for Hidden Paths, even after my spoof movie review, "Monty Python's Life of Gerald", appeared in #7. How humorless can they be?

Brightshadow

Feb. 5, 1991

Dear Protean Family,

The letters in the issue of PS that arrived today forced me to realize that it is time to be blunt.

The ultraconservative crowd in Louisville, around The Hidden Path, and their sympathizers have been accusing all other Gardnerians of attempting to change the nature of Gardnerianism, and of attempting to force the conservatives to accept their changes as being okay. Voran of Phoenix Rising, the guy who hosts the Louisville Gather and wants to keep everybody else out of his circle, has made this specific accusation in print. He is wrong, probably out of ignorance; he is almost certainly not aware that he is projecting what he himself is doing onto his "enemies." The fact is that it is the ultraconservatives who have introduced changes, and who are attempting to force those changes on everyone else. It is they who have decided that the specific way they were initiated is the only correct way to be initiated as a Gardnerian; and that IS a change, because all other Gardnerians have always had and exercised the right to rewrite the initiation and other rituals as they saw fit. Voran can think this only because his teachers did not give him a complete and accurate history of the Craft, and of the evolution of the initiation rituals within it.

You cannot logically demand that a valid initiatory circle must be cast only by a third-degree Gardnerian Priestess who was initiated in a circle cast by, etc., because ALL lineages go back to circles cast by Gerald Gardner, who at least never claimed to be a priestess. Furthermore, normal procedure for casting ALL circles before 1957 was that the circles were cast by the Priest, not the Priestess! The proof is in my book Crafting the Art of Magick, Book I, which will be out from Llewellyn in April. (Sorry~~y~~ about that, but it's a big improvement over my having to say "my unpublished tome.")

At this point I have identified at least five different drafts of the initiation rituals:

1. As they were worked by the original New Forest coven, ca. 1940-1944; these were something like what Rhiannon Ryall describes, and there WAS NO SCOURGE.

2. As rewritten by Gardner to work in as much binding and scourging as possible, and used from 1946-1953; these were as in High Magic's Aid.

3. As rewritten by Doreen Valiente during her administration as High Priestess of the London coven, 1953-1957.

4. As rewritten again by Gardner after Doreen split, in late 1957 or later. These were the versions given to Pat Crowther and Monique Wilson, and hence the basis for the ones considered standard in American Gardnerianism.

5. As further revised by the Bucklands and/or the Kneitels during their administration of the Long Island coven.

Neither Voran nor anyone else has any historical, theological, or legal grounds for choosing just one of these versions, and claiming that it is and always was the one and only authentic way to initiate, and that he can therefore exclude anyone who differs from membership in the Gardnerian movement. This is not a matter of opinion; it is something that I could prove in a court of law if I had to -- and when you are discussing such matters as organizational membership and the legal rights thereof, ownership of the organization's intellectual property, and so on,

which IS what we are discussing, then the court of law becomes a very real possibility. And you cannot claim that "Craft Law" forbids going to court when that "Law" was itself written only in 1957.

Of course any organization needs some quality control, in order to know who is and is not a member, but how that is done had already been decided by the New York coven: any third-degree priestess who has (or is entitled to) a complete set of lineage papers tracing her line back to Gerald Gardner IS a Gardnerian High Priestess, and that fact cannot be revoked (we'd have to accept papers from Doreen Valiente, or Pat Crowther, or Ray Bone, or Lois Hemmings, etc., IF anyone had them); and any initiation that such a Priestess intends to be Gardnerian IS Gardnerian, because it passes the authority and responsibility for maintaining the lineage, INCLUDING THE ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO REWRITE GERALD'S GODAWFUL RITUALS ANY WAY SHE PLEASES. I personally maintain that I am now a Gardnerian High Priest, that no one has the authority to deny that fact, and that I have the right to do anything Old Gerald did in the interests of meeting my own needs and furthering the Craft as a religion.

By voting not to accept the Samhain Letter as authoritative, the Louisville Gather established its right to function as a Parliament by exercising that function; and it thereby demonstrated that not even Lady Theos could turn around and contradict herself, and take back what she had already agreed to. Similarly, ultraconservatives cannot replace the lineage papers by their own definition of what an initiation is supposed to be. However, the Louisville Gather lost the right to claim to be a Parliament for all Gardnerians, when it allowed the ultraconservatives to impose their own arbitrary rules as to who will be admitted to the major liturgical event at what is plainly a religious gathering. I am also extremely annoyed that the attempt to convene a genuinely national Gardnerian Parliament last year was sabotaged by failure to mail announcements in time and by devious communication of various sorts. I hope to agitate for the formation of a different organizing committee the next time such a plan is tried.

Therefore, Meredydd: please stop believing the bullshit from the Midwest. You already have valid Gardnerian initiation, and you cannot get a more valid one from anyone else. If you want to circle with Voran and his ilk, then you'll have to goose-step to his tune, but that is merely a matter of taste.

Rita: from the moment your Third-Degree Elevation was complete, you were entitled to your lineage papers. The fact that you have never wanted to associate with the people who perpetrated the Samhain Letter does not change the fact that you therefore were, are, & always will be a Gardnerian High Priestess. The Protean Tradition, however, includes some people who were initiated by rituals not intended to be Gardnerian. Some Witches are both Protean and Gardnerian; some are one; some the other; and some are neither. I honestly can't see why the UWC Board would have any problem with this in any event. It can have both a Protean member and a Gardnerian member.

Valerie: remembering the events of February 1987, what a delicious irony that it is I who am now in a position to defend the validity of your Gardnerian initiation.

Blessed be,

*Aidan*

Aidan Kelly

## A Beginner's Look at the Protean Conundrum

Dear Protean Family and Friends:

I'm as "green as a tree" when it comes to Wiccan ritual; I've been in Proteus Coven about 10 months — not yet first degree. As a seasoned bluegrass musician I have been exposed, however, to a debate along "traditional/experimental" lines which parallels the Gardnerian/Protean schism. (I compose, sing and play banjo and guitar in a variety of formal as well as nonimitative styles.) I hope to shed some musician's light on the Gardnerian, emergent Protean Gardnerian and Protean Trad issues, drawing from my broader musical experience. Subcultures run along similar lines.

As head of Joyous Gard, a BMI music publishing and record company, I will soon release Tom Hanway/Bucket of Bees on CD and cassette, my first album of traditional and original music. In bluegrass, I appreciate traditionalists but prefer the company of innovators and eclectics, considering myself among the latter types. Similarly, in Wicca I feel a kinship with Gardnerians but am more taken to people like Judy and Rita, whose creative efforts give new life to an emergent Tradition. My recording effort [14 songs, 7 originals, 50 minutes] pays respect to traditional bluegrass, yet branches out: "newgrass," "jazzgrass," elements of Celtic, blues, folk/Ethnic (Hungarian, Russian, Hindu raga) and chamber music. Recorded in NYC and Nashville, I was backed by musicians ("shamans") who routinely commute between the traditional and experimental realms in bluegrass/new acoustic music. I was fortunate to learn a great deal from these "elders" and I feel blessed to have recorded with such fine people, inspired musicians — some legends. (I'm predicting a vernal-equinoctial release-date and plan to market Bucket of Bees through retail stores, magazines, catalogs, and in person at gigs, etc.)

As you can see, my life revolves around this solo project — of course I'm promoting it; I'm the artist, composer, arranger, producer (along with Tony Trischka & Larry Cohen), publisher, record company (executive) and managing agent. (I miss the days when I walked the street with my banjo.) It's from these integrated experiences that I mull over and scrutinize the Protean issues (a conundrum). I empathize with Judy, who's got a traditional background (in part) but who is willing to experiment, dabble, invent and break with Gardnerian ritual structure (formalism). I also admire Rita for refusing to submit to the "Daughters of the Gardnerian Revolution."

I understand the Gardnerian impulse to insulate themselves from innovators and eclectics who cannot adhere to their ritual formalism. At the same time, I admire Rita's bold decision to leave the Gardnerian "sandbox." I identify with her for renouncing the Gardnerians who sought to lift the drawbridge of lineage to her Wiccan birthplace.

I approve of Judy's efforts at keeping the Protean family as inclusive as possible and know that she'll continue to extend

open arms, despite the labelling tendencies of Gardnerians and others — tendencies that serve as a red herring, whether they occur from within Wicca (or bluegrass) or from without. In Wicca, such labelling smacks of elitism, furthers division by causing "bruised" feelings, and is out of touch with the "spirit of Gardnerian process." The revivalist Wiccan process goes on even if Gardnerian formalists have lost step with it. Wiccan Tradition is not cut from whole cloth, but rather evolves over time through the efforts of genuinely creative witches like Judy and Rita.

Now to the Protean mess: After reading PS 23 & 24 I'm left with the strong impression that Rita's choice of "Protean Trad" creates confusion on top of an already existing controversy. The controversy is with the Gardnerian formalists who point out that theirs is an exacting and uncompromising process of initiation rituals (by the book). The confusion aspect stems from the apparently ambiguous term "Protean Trad."

In PS 23, p. 15, Judy states, "We have created a kind of grouping other than the normal Wiccan Tradition....Since we were not a Tradition, no conflict was created for those of us who wished to maintain our Gardnerian affiliations." (Emphasis added.) It occurs to me that long before the UWC membership stipulation (one Trad per coven), there was an ambiguity over "Protean" from the moment Rita adopted the title — just waiting to rear its beautiful head. Like Janus, god of gates (seen with two faces looking in opposite directions), Proteus now looks toward its Gardnerian past (present/future) and "Protean" future (present/past). For Rita, a "Protean" future would mean a non-Gardnerian structure; yet for others a "Protean" future would allow Gardnerian structure and hold dear the lineage connection, passing it on to successive generations. Still for others Gardnerianism would be embraced, in some manner, but de-emphasized in favor of Protean ritual forms. These are a few of the possibilities.

It is my view that a Protean future is likely to be complicated enough without Rita issuing a "Protean Trad," which has a clearly different meaning for her, one that others — I imagine — would want no part of. This is not to say that persons who want no part of a "Protean Trad" designation don't want to associate with Rita or Judy or Protean-family covens and individuals. Put another way, my hunch is that a lot of Judy's initiates, Protean Gardnerian or otherwise, seek not to renounce Gardnerianism as did Rita — in fact quite the contrary; I imagine these folks would be rather dismayed, and some intimidated, if Rita were to proclaim a "Protean Trad." I think a "Protean Trad" designation isn't such a bad idea, but it cannot come from Rita, who is an avowed non-Gardnerian....

I hope Rita doesn't base her decision to join the UWC on the Protean conundrum; however, I feel that the "needs of the many" outweigh her well-founded impulse to use "Protean Trad"; too many self-defining witches would be lumped under it, even if only by implication. Indeed, witches are protective of their

lineage, for good reasons, and a number of them would reject "Protean Trad" as issuing from Rita — a non-Gardnerian who, according to Judy ("Gardnerians are still Gardnerians") is "Gardnerian."

In PS 23 Rita writes, "I'm glad I'm not involved." But Rita, so long as you call yourself "Protean Trad," aren't you still involved in the Gardnerian/Protean Gardnerian controversy? Your involvement is, of course, unique but still in the midst of the Protean conundrum. A controversy would still exist for other Proteans if you were to proclaim an alternative title, but at least then they wouldn't be caught between a rock and a hard place.

Personally, Rita, I appreciate your position and have a waning interest in allying myself with rote-Gardnerians who prattle about lineage, doing it by the sex manual — I mean book — and think it's "unthinkable" or heretical to create and experiment. They can have their exclusive title and sterile format.

Old trees grow new rings or they perish: Wicca grows through the circles of Judy and Rita or "necroses." Indeed, creative people live Judy and Rita keep the Tradition alive and growing. Were Gardner and initiates (e.g., Valiente) closer to Judy and Rita than to today's formalists with respect to ritual-process, -invention, -adaptation, and -synthesis? And what about Gardner's "authoritative" version of Wicca? And what of claims to authenticity of Gardnerian structure, then or today? Isn't it common knowledge among Wiccans that the nascent Gardnerian "Tradition" was assembled "out of a desk" — many pre-existing ritual fragments woven, bent, spliced, cut and pasted together (containing Gardner's and others' personality imprints) in search of a workable and coherent whole? Did not G.B.G. and D.V., time and time again, create, edit, delete and modify material? Were they not experimentalists and eclectics?

Having stirred up these matters, doesn't the Gardnerian/Protean Gardnerian (traditional/experimental, formalist/non-conformist, purist/mongrel) lineage debate seem an elitist red herring? If, historically speaking, we view Gardnerianism to mean revivalist Wicca, engendered by Gardner's and others' refusal to allow the demise of the old Craft of the Wise, then can we not help but applaud Judy and Rita's efforts to revive and "proteanize" Wicca? (By revivalist Wicca I mean a partially manufactured, ever-changing Tradition — in the innovative spirit of Gardner, Valiente and other forebears in recent times.)

Lastly, I'm turned on by Judy's observance that some Protean rituals are akin to jazz improvisation, when they deviate from our classical Gardnerian Tradition. I myself look forward to growing within Wiccan Tradition (allowing for eclecticism) and to meeting and sharing more of myself with witches and pagans (also musicians). I have but one lineage preference: come from Gaia...except for you extraterrestrials....

Love and Blessings to all,

Tom Harway

Deryni Magic: A Grimoire

by Katherine Kurtz

(Ballantine, 1990; ISBN 0-345-36117-2; \$5.95)

(Reviewed by Ashta'arArthura)

Many contemporary Witches (as well as Pagans and magick-users of other persuasions) were first drawn to magick through reading "fantasy" fiction. For some it was Tolkien, or E. R. Eddison, or Andre Norton's "Witch World", while for others it was the Deryni novels of Katherine Kurtz. Ms. Kurtz is well-grounded in occult theory, medieval history, and the applications and limitations of magick; she also tells one hell of a good story.

Briefly put (for those who have spent the last fifteen years or so in the Oort Cloud), the Deryni live in a setting vaguely resembling the British Isles in the seventh through tenth centuries A.C.E. They are usually referred to as a separate "race", although their physical appearance ranges the gamut of ordinary human differences (hair color, skin color, eye color, height, build, etc.). What sets the Deryni apart is their "magic"; as described, it seems to be a set of psionic talents within a framework of mysticism and ritual. Deryni can read minds (Deryni and human), communicate with animals, heal, summon illusions, teleport, cause small objects to move, conjure heatless light, and even kill with a blast of mental energy. Ms. Kurtz's Deryni novels and short stories have depicted the uses of these talents, and the misunderstandings between human and Deryni that arise.

This book is not a novel. It is, literally, a grimoire. Ms. Kurtz has undertaken to explain in detail how the Deryni use their "magic", how and why it works, and how ritual and ceremony are a necessary part of it. She even points out the parallels between Deryni workings and various modern occult practices. And, indeed, many of the rituals detailed herein read as if they would work without any inbred psychic power at all.

Because of the medieval setting, all the material is firmly embedded in Christian mythology and ritual structure. In that, it bears a slight resemblance to some current interpretations of ceremonial magick. It would undoubtedly fit in spectacularly well at an SCA event. However, this is ultimately not relevant. The magickal theory and practice set forth in detail in Deryni Magic deserve the attention of any serious student of "the occult". This book definitely has a place in a modern Witch's reference library.

## Divination as Counseling

Reprinted from *EVCHIANTE*, the Journal for the Urbane Pagan

**Z** Budapest is a Dianic Wiccan priestess who reads the Tarot for clients. Back in 1975, she was also a cause celebre. The local cops busted her for "fortune telling" in violation of a town ordinance. Although it would have been cheaper and easier simply to pay the fine, Z. fought the case. Nine years later, the California Supreme Court struck down the law under which she had been arrested. Z. resisted because she believed Tarot reading and all other forms of divination are, for Wiccans, forms of spiritual counseling, an intrinsic part of the work of a priest/ess.

Do you believe that? I do. But what do we mean when we say we believe it? We mean, I think, that we are doing something other than pandering to querent desires for cheap thrills or easy answers to our own desire for a quick buck. We mean specifically to separate ourselves from the common stereotype of "fortune tellers." But if we really mean *that*, our behavior ought to show it. As users of magic, we know the need to "act in accordance" with whatever we profess, or, in plain English, to practice what we preach.

If divination is priestly work, a form of spiritual counseling for Wiccans, then it has to be both good counseling and good Craft. Because we read in our role as priest/esses, our working assumptions should be consistent with the values of our religion. Because we read for the purpose of spiritual counseling, we should use good general counseling techniques with our querents.

The counseling profession has a professional philosophy of its own. That could create complications, but it doesn't. The core values of Wiccan spirituality and the counseling profession are completely con-

sistent, even though the vocabulary may be different.

But I often see or hear of readings being done using both methods and assumptions completely discordant with both Wiccan values and counseling methods. It's possible that, for those readers, divination is simply not a form of Wiccan spiritual counseling. Certainly there are plenty of non-Wiccan readers. In fact, an entire separate network of "secular psychics" exists out there. But some of them are Wiccans who just haven't thought through the behavioral implications of their professed beliefs, and it is for them that I write this.

Does the contemporary Craft have a sacred scripture, a text that defines our Path? We like to think we don't, but we really do. It's drastically shorter, more succinct and far more poetic than anybody else's Bible, but it's there. We call it the Charge of the Goddess. Think about how truly trans-Traditional that one text is. Do you know any Wiccan, anywhere, who is not moved by it?

Although there are no wasted words in the Charge, it does clearly build to a climax. As I read it, the most important statement comes at the end, and says, "You who think to seek me, know that your seeking and yearning will avail you not unless you know the mystery: That if what you seek you find not within you, you will never find it without you." So, at the very heart of our religion lies the teaching that ultimate value and authority rests within each of us. Whatever detracts from that concept conflicts with our religion. Any behavior that models an alienation of power is not appropriate behavior for a priest/ess of the Wicca.

The counseling profession is based on exactly the same assumption: that the client is fully capable of making and implementing appropriate decisions about his or her own life. All a counselor does is provide safe and supportive conditions in which the client can examine her situation and come to her own conclusions. A counselor who disempowers a client, narrows her range of choice, tells her what to do, fails as a counselor.

What does this have to do with divination? To begin with, there are two ways of understanding exactly what it is we do when we read. Some diviners of the old school believe that they actually foretell the future. A future that can be read is a predestined future, one that cannot be changed. In this pessimistic world view, the querent has no choices. Fate cannot be avoided. The best we can do is prepare ourselves to accept what must come with some dignity.

The belief in a fixed future discourages querents from taking responsibility for decision and effort in their own lives. It provides an easy, comfortable excuse for the lazy and dependent. How often have you heard people use their sun sign as an alibi for various kinds of self-destructive or mean behavior? Wiccan priest/esses reinforce such attitudes only by closing their eyes to the celebration of personal freedom that is central to our Path.

**A**s magic users, we know that magic is the art of changing consciousness in accordance with will. That knowledge makes us especially responsible for the messages we give to others, especially querents who come to us for help. If a reader uses the props of special insight and spiritual authority to tell a querent the future is inevitable, that reader has changed the querent's consciousness in the direction of ignoring options, denying choices. To drain our querent's power

### —I Ching

*Wilhelm/Baynes translation (italics added)*

The phrase "freedom of choice" sounds completely modern. But this quotation does not come from any rationalistic modern translator or commentator. It comes from a section of the *I Ching* called the Great Commentary, which some believe may contain the words of Confucius or one of his immediate students. It reveals an optimistic, empowering view of divination, in which we can understand reading as a way to look very deeply into the *present*, where the seeds of all possible futures can be seen.

By using traditional symbols and practices to reach into the most intuitive and insightful parts of ourselves, we can identify trends and make extrapolations, bring to light both ignored perceptions and gut-level integrations of information. We read to increase our querents' freedom of choice, and to allow them to make the best possible choices. We help them see where present trends will probably lead and experience how they will probably feel about the outcomes. If they are unhappy, they

that way is evil magic indeed—for who can act on choices they do not believe they have? Thus the prophecies of a fixed future become self-fulfilling.

But there is a very different way of understanding divination, one that is no less traditional. For example, the *I Ching* says:

"King Wen and his son then added the interpretations; from these it could be ascertained whether the course of action indicated by the images augured good or ill. *This marked the entrance of freedom of choice.* From that time on, one could see, in the representation of events, not only what might be expected to happen, but also where it might lead. With the complex of events immediately before one in image form, one could follow the courses that promised good fortune and avoid those that promised misfortune, before the train of events had actually begun. . . .

*"If a trend has been wrong, and we feel sorrow in time, we can avoid misfortune; if we turn back, we can still achieve good fortune."*

can make changes in time. We do not see *the future*, but *a range of possible futures*. Power, authority, choice and responsibility lie within each of us, exactly where our religion says they belong.

**O**ur belief that divinatory work is for us the practice of spiritual counseling manifests not just in the attitude from which we read, but in the nitty-gritty ways of how we do our readings.

If it's counseling, and not some form of fraud or entertainment, we will insist on a dignified and private setting. Our self-respect as priest/esses means far more to us than attractive marketing. We won't get ourselves up in hokey costumes for dramatic effect. We won't consider reading a party gig, won't do it for tips in bars.

*continued on page 12*

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We'll keep it out of the tourist traps and the carney atmospheres created to attract the bored to the shopping malls. We'll give each reading the same sort of time as any other kind of counseling session, and we'll do no more in a day than we can do with full attention and energy.

Some readers prefer the querent to be as silent as possible during a reading, so that it's clear they are not "cueing" the psychic. This makes it obvious that whatever is learned came from the reader's "special powers". Great for fattening the reader's ego, and for fostering dependency in the querent to ensure return business. But those who believe that power over is against this religion won't work that way—at least not for long.

Because we understand that clarifying the question is the most important part of finding the answer, even before laying out a single card we will work with the querent to express the question at hand as clearly as possible. Often a major life problem has many interrelated aspects. We'll work to identify as many of these as possible, then use a spread that takes them into account. As specialists, we will

be familiar with many spreads and understand how they can apply to different kinds of questions. We may even custom design a spread on the spot, but we won't try to force all human situations into a Celtic Cross pattern.

If we believe our job is to help our querents make their own best choices about their own lives, our behavior will show it. We won't expect the querent to sit in silence while we show off our "powers". The perceptions, integrations and feelings that will help lie in the querent's deep mind. We will filter them as little as possible through our own. Instead, the querent will do most of the talking in a session, while we supply some information about traditional interpretations, or use normal counseling techniques to help the querent hear what s/he is saying and understand how s/he is feeling about the situation at hand. We will know that the ultimate choices rest with the querent, and we will act on that knowledge. Our pleasure will be in their freedom.

If we are Wiccan priest/esses and counselors, how can we do any less?

—Judy Harrow

The Rest of the Rune Poems  
by Ashta'ae Arthura

13



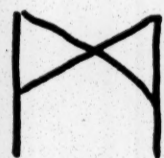
Berkana

The beautiful birch      betokens blessings,  
Burgeoning, blossoming,      beginnings, birth;  
The heart's home,      here or hidden;  
Marriage or maternity,      like Mother Earth.



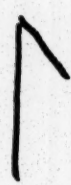
Ehwaz

Steady and slow,      by stages and steps.  
It may mean a move,      or maybe motion;  
The process proceeds      prepared for progress,  
Travel, transition,      or transportation.



Mannaz

Accept the aid      which others offer,  
Ask advice      of all ability;  
Seek your Self      and see the solution;  
Heed human help,      and hold humility.



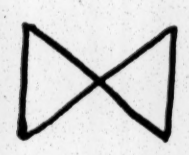
Laguz

Women's wisdom,      worked by will.  
 Indicated by inner      intuition:  
 Like lunar light      on a limpid lake,  
 The inward insight      of imagination.



Ing

The Lady's lover,      lusty with life.  
 From bare beginnings      brings blessed birth.  
 Clarity, completion,      clear conclusion.  
 Real relief,      renewal, rebirth.



Dagaz

Darkness is done      at dawn of day,  
 You know the newness      of no more night;  
 Try; you will triumph,      transformed by trust.  
 Learning from lovely      living light.



Othila

Feel the fullness of family funds.  
 Relatives, real-estate realized;  
 Ideas, ideals, inheritance;  
 Pensions: possessions personally prized.

# THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR

Eight are the points around the Circle's rim;  
 It matters not at which point you begin.

Yule is the time of Winter's longest night;  
 We warm ourselves with fires blazing bright,  
 And celebrate the Sun's returning Light.

At Brigid, Winter still seems cold and strong,  
 But now we see the daylight growing long,  
 And greet it gladly with inspired song.

At Samhain, when the Summer's warmth has fled,  
 We listen for the spirits' soundless tread,  
 And set a feast for our beloved dead.

Ostara brings the promise of re-birth,  
 The hope of Spring, to end the Winter's dearth;  
 Beneath the snow, we find the fertile Earth.

Mabon is when the crops are gathered in,  
 We stock the pantry shelves, and fill each bin,  
 So Winter will not leave us starved and thin.

Beltane's the time for dancing, love, and play,  
 And, as of old, the Maypole marks the day,  
 While impudently welcoming the May.

Lughnasad harvests now the grapes and grain,  
 The berries ripen — soon no more remain;  
 In Summer's heat we long for Autumn's rain.

Midsummer is the longest day of all,  
 The blazing Sun now holds us in His thrall,  
 Yet at His greatest height begins His fall.

Another turn around the Wheel we've gone;  
 The cycle never ends; the Wheel turns on.

Crystal Power, The Ultimate Placebo Effect.

Lawrence E. Jerome,  
Prometheus Books, Buffalo,  
New York. ISBN: 0-87975-514-8

Reviewed by Julie O'Ryan

Crystal Power, The Ultimate Placebo Effect, is a well written, open-minded, carefully documented search for crystal power. It is an entertaining, first-person account of Lawrence's systematic appraisal of the numerous claims made by New Age "crystal workers" about crystals. He is a scientist and a member of CSICOP, a trained sceptic; yet, as he says, "As a seeker of esoteric knowledge, I've found myself 'pulling for' the crystals, hoping for the experiments to come out in the crystals' favor." He doesn't claim to "prove" or "disprove" anything, nor does he claim to have the "answer" to crystal power; however, Lawrence does offer a hypothesis of what crystal power is and is not, and a great deal of scientific and statistical support for his hypothesis.

As an adjunct professor for the College of Professional Studies, University of San Francisco, one of the courses he teaches is Advanced Writing. So it is no surprise that this book is extremely well organized. The entire discussion is easily understood. At no point does Lawrence, or the reader, lose sight of where we've been and where we are going with the argument. The claims for crystal power are broken down into five categories: physical, medical, parapsychological, spiritual, legendary. Within each category are several statements that are a representative list of the claims made by crystal-power advocates and authors. The author then examines each list in turn, offering explanations of how or how not these claims could be understood. Along the way we are given a brief introduction to materials science, and discussions of: the scientific method, how

crystals grow, electromagnetism, synthetic crystal growth in laboratories, and crystal lasers.

The most important discussion in this book is the one concerning the placebo effect. Lawrence's hypothesis is that crystals are the "ultimate placebo." He carefully explains what the placebo effect is in medical research, its corollary in the social sciences, the Hawthorne effect, and the religious equivalent--the totem effect. He summarizes his research regarding these phenomena, "Here is a medical 'treatment' that helps cure 35% of all sufferers of a wide variety of ailments and which has been given credit for almost all medical 'cures' throughout history. In short, the placebo effect must be the single most effective medicine known to man. However, doctors not only don't make use of it, but they talk of placebos in derogatory tone!" Lawrence then offers significant statistical support for his hypothesis that crystal healers effect healings by inducing the placebo effect. He concludes, "The reason we have drugs is because they are more effective than placebos, but what about cases and diseases which do not respond to drugs? Shouldn't we try to fill in those gaps, perhaps add a bit of preventive medicine, by understanding and using placebos, totems, and the Hawthorne effect?" This is the most important discussion in Crystal Power because here we are told exactly how to use crystals.

As Witches and Healers, a working knowledge of the placebo effect, and its corollaries, will allow us to use crystals as powerful tools to help the people who come to us. "Since crystal power exhibits all three effects (placebo, Hawthorne, and totem), it functions as an ultimate placebo effect. . . Perhaps that is why prehistoric shamans, witch doctors, and medicine men were successful for thousands of years: they used treatments that combined all three effects; in short, they

# Reprinted from HARVEST

Dear Editors:

The old and stalemated argument between hawks and doves dominates the letter column of the Yule, 1990 issue of *Harvest*. I'm a long-time dove who is no longer satisfied with simplistic "all good" or "all bad" judgements about the warrior ethic. Both doves and hawks have allowed our political positions to harden into prejudices, refusing to judge each case on its own merits. So some dumb doves would spit on anybody in uniform, while some hawks actually defended the child murderer, William Calley. This willed stupidity has kept us stuck in the same argument for thirty years now, destroying any chance of understanding or resolution.

The real issues are complicated. We can't make them simple, nor should we even try. The present frightening times require all of us to explore their complexity. Between the time I write this and the time you read it, some of us will have to make personal decisions with possibly irrevocable consequences. Please, kindred, let's slow down and look close.

True-believing doves dismiss the warrior ethic as a poor rationalization for aggression and dominance, and so it can be. But warriors are not necessarily bullies. At its finest, the warrior ethic is noble and very real, based in personal courage and in interpersonal bonding. It begins with the willingness to risk one's life for the Tribe, but completes itself in the willingness to risk one's life for one's immediate companions in arms. Just like a coven, the fighting unit is, when it works, a kind of willed family. Heroism in the field proves to us all that the human bonds created are very strong and very real.

Individual people have acted bravely and generously under great stress in all armies, even those fighting for the most evil of causes. This heroism may or may not be good for the larger Tribe when viewed in broader historical perspective. Some wars are unjust, harmful or stupid -- actively destructive or simply not worth the cost to life and land. Hawks ignore the possibility that a particular war might be a Real Bad Idea. But doves ignore the reality that warrior behavior is, for the individual and the small group, almost always a very good thing.

For tribal people, admission to adult status often required the risk of life. Perhaps only some of the young men were warriors, but all were hunters, a dangerous and arduous pursuit back before guns. Before contraception, almost every sexually active woman conceived, and in birthing went down to the gates of death to bring new life to the Tribe.

They were brought up to see these risks as both needful and noble. But, then as now, nobody really knows how they will react in stress, pain or danger until the moment of challenge arrives. In societies where the young face a difficult and life threatening challenge, all get to find out the real truth about themselves. Most will succeed and survive, and so will gain a lifelong sense of confidence and self-worth.

But most of our young will never test their own mettle, and so will never know. Nowadays we get our meat shrink-wrapped at supermarkets, bear our young with medical backup. We would not forego these benefits, but we should also count their cost. This lack of a critical formative experience may be what has saddled us all with a phalanx of "me first" yuppies and the meaner, harsher America they have created. In contrast, watch the ones who know for sure they can count on themselves and each other to understand what the rest of us have missed.

Some of us are driven to invent cheap substitute tests, risking their lives without purpose in such thrill seeking activities as violent sports or automobile racing. Some find a nonviolent, but still very real, test in direct activism for cherished causes. Firefighters still risk their lives for their communities, many as volunteers, without seeking to control or dominate. And some still serve as warriors, in the military and in the police.

Doves ignore the nobility inherent in the warrior code, but have opinions about the injustice of particular causes. Hawks tend to ignore the larger contexts of warrior behavior, which are too often simple competitions for territory or resources, completely

amoral exercises in "us against them." A common hawk motto is "my country, right or wrong." That logic leads directly to Wounded Knee, Babi Yar and My Lai. Sadly, some people of great personal courage and honor have followed it to such hells.

Bill Hines' letter is an example. He gives us at one point a listing of great generals which juxtaposes Grant and Lee, generals who lead armies directly against one another in the same war. I'm no expert on military history, but from all I've heard, the fact is that Lee far outshone Grant in the warrior virtues. Another fact, the one the Hines ignores, is that Lee, in his unquestioning loyalty to his place of birth and the warrior code, fought to preserve the abomination of human slavery. Lee -- and, yes, even the Nazi, Rommel -- were noble warriors in microcosm. In macrocosm, their personal nobility served horror.

True-believing hawks make another mistake that is complementary to one the knee-jerk doves make. Just as doves dismiss all warriors as "bullies," hawks dismiss all pacifists as "wimps." Both sides are sometimes right, which further complicates the matter. Some bullies do pose as warriors to give them an excuse, and some wimps pose as pacifists. Some people are completely self-involved, unwilling or unable to risk themselves for the Tribe. Inside themselves these pathetic few wimps pay the price in loss of self-esteem. Further punishment is redundant.

Meanwhile, the real pacifists place their bodies between the rapists and the Earth Mother. Fernando Pereira, the photographer on the Rainbow Warrior died that way. Others confront human oppression with only truth and courage for weapons. Viola Liuzzo died on the roads of Alabama, for giving a Black man a ride. Daniel Ellsberg, who took great personal risks to stop the corrupt from manipulating the warrior code to defraud our nation, was the greatest hero the Vietnam period produced. No person who has spoken truth to power, confronted oppression and evil with moral force alone, can reasonably be called a coward.

Nor is everyone who refrains from military service a pacifist. Some are fully possessed of the warrior virtues -- and a little bit more. Besides physical courage and personal generosity, these people have the independence of mind to study the issues of the current war, and the intellectual and moral courage to refuse to kill or die for a wrongful cause. The footsteps they will not follow are those of Lee or Rommel. For this refusal to "just follow orders," they face insults and worse. The accusations of cowardice they bear are the proof of their courage.

For our American to finally heal, we must hear each other -- both ways. Doves need to appreciate the warrior virtues. Hawks need to respect the different virtues of the pacifist and resister. Pagans, ostensibly polytheists, should find it easy to understand that there are many sacred Paths, quite different from one another and all are to be respected. Imbalance, or the delusion of being the One True Way can corrupt any one of them. The opportunity to hear the stories and feelings of people walking a contrasting Path, in the context of polytheism, offers the gift of balance and potential healing.

Well, we're most of us new at this religion, and still sometimes fail to apply its special wisdom to ordinary matters. And so the letters in the Yule *Harvest* mirror the general situation, in which each side makes its own points ad nauseum without even hearing the points the other side is making. Such discussion gets us nowhere, at a time when we need to go far and fast.

Now we have that wall in Washington, a memorial to the Vietnam dead, and well we should. In microcosm, there was every bit as much courage and generosity shown there as in any other army. So we can find the largeness of heart to lay a wreath even at Bitburg. But where is the other memorial? I mean the one to those who faced prison, or exile -- or endured years of plain, unglamorous work without spotlight or adrenaline charge -- the ones who at long last redeemed our country from an evil war?

Certainly, we must honor the personal heroism of those who in innocence went to Vietnam, and acted well once there. But it's long past time to honor equally the wisdom and courage of those who refused to go. Let's not waste the sacrifice of Vietnam's dead, when we might instead finally accept the lesson Vietnam can

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had discovered--whether consciously or not--the ultimate placebo effect long before the New Age and modern crystal power." Crystals can be used to empower the student, help the physically ill, and help those in need of pastoral counseling. However, the knowledge of how the crystals work also challenges us to learn more of the healing arts, psychology, hypnotic suggestion, and counseling techniques precisely because we must acknowledge that the crystals themselves are powerless in these areas. We can consciously, deliberately use the placebo as a magical tool, and not blindly lean on the myths of the crystal's innate power as a magical crutch.

teach us. A new generation of Germans has faced the reality of the Holocaust and finally rejected ng-standing evil patterns in their culture. Americans are capable of doing as well. Nothing less can protect us from a repetition.

Our nation needs the moral courage to admit that we have been tragically wrong in all the Indian Wars, the Mexican War, the suppression of the Philippine Insurrection, Vietnam, and many lesser incursions and adventures in between and since. Until we can do so, we will not stop. Until we stop, until these wrongs are truly past, how can we ever forgive ourselves and move on? When we rationalize and justify turf wars, we preserve America's glorious self-image at the cost of real self-esteem. That's a real bad bargain.

It's time to stop talking about "war" as an abstraction, as both doves and hawks usually do, and to speak instead about particular wars. They are not all the same. It's time to adapt a wise old prayer, and as Pagan Americans to seek inside ourselves for the courage to change the things we can change. I pray we find it soon. The corrupt still do use warrior rhetoric cynically to manipulate the naive into their armies. And they're rolling out the guns again.

Judy Harrow

### TOWARD A PROTEAN TRADITION

Now for those of you who follow the Michigan soap opera, Alex turned out to have some pretty severe emotional imbalances; possibly inherent, almost certainly aggravated by degree shock. But even when loony-tunes, he was pretty bright, and this one's worth quoting directly. He noted that:

"You've been asking if Proteans are Gardnerians.  
It's obvious that they're not.  
Proteans have a sense of humor!"

His next opinion was that Proteans are the next evolutionary step from Gardnerianism, retaining the love and the spirituality of the worship, losing the dogmatism and the rigidity, gaining the spirit of play which is so essential to true spirituality. My research gives some potential credibility to his viewpoint; seems that rigidity and dogmatism and clinging to the book tend to mark dying religions rather than living, thriving faiths. (But I will yield to my more learned sibs if this perspective is faulty.)

It should be noted that my premise has been, since this research began, that Proteans are not Gardnerians; this feeling was part of the reason for the research into Gardnerianism in the first place. The arguments needed to be investigated. And each new piece of data made me re-examine that premise, and each time it was re-examined it was reinforced, but for different reasons.

**FAMILY** Proteans take the family-feeling from the Gardnerian traditionals, and carry it a couple steps further. While there have been several attempts to boot us, I cannot conceive of a world in which we would ostracize a sibling over a matter of conscience. Part of the ethic of this family is the respect of conscience. Family (at its best) means both love and respect, and even if that boils down to "the chosen of my chosen", we're still a pretty nifty bunch of folks!

**RITUAL WORK** In the circulating copies of our various rituals, I have certainly seen scripts I wouldn't be comfortable performing; I have never seen a bad script. No doubt some of you have not liked some of mine; that's fine. The important thing is that the same spirit runs through them all, as each of us struggle to find the words to express the spirit, the love, and the wonder of our lives as Witches on this world. There is a uniformity of heart amongst us which lends a certain similarity to our family.

**RESPECT** This is perhaps the hardest to talk about, much like intellectual integrity, or love or something. We hold a tremendous respect for the individual, which shines through in our writings, our conversations, even in our differences. It must have been tremendously hard for Judy to bless my searching when I began working with Maiani; still she did that. It touches me a bunch that those same Protean qualities that have led Meredydd to do right by her people, and respect them and back their call, have ultimately led to the formation of the CalGard line. And it's that respect for her

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people, that sense of responsibility to family, that leaves my door open to Meredydd and family, in person or in print, any time they want to come visit. Proteans respect conscience calls.

So who are we? We are bright, creative, dedicated folks; we serve our Gods, help each other, share ideas and techniques and the occasional recipe. We have our shared and individual dreams, hopes, viewpoints and ritual techniques; we have a shared sense of ethics and responsibility that seems to carry even unto the third and subsequent generations. We have a tolerance and an openness that allows cross-generational sharing in a big way. And we have each other -- the doctors, the programmers, the theologians, the writers, the poets, etc

What is a Protean? A Protean is a doer, in whatever way his conscience shows to be most productive. A Protean is a lover of the Earth and Her children. And usually, a Protean is focused on being part of the solution, not part of the problem. A Protean is tolerant, but not blind to the facts; loving, but willing to express an opinion that disagrees; willing to learn and to grow. And we fight WELL, something which makes us unique among Pagan families and lines, in my experience -- nothing below the belt, and no subsequent dolly-whammies, but an honest expression of disagreement with policies or practices, and a subsequent consideration of the points made.

Like Meredydd, I am a graft onto this line; unlike Meredydd, this is where I choose to remain affiliated. With all respect to my sib, to whom my door remains firmly open whatever her choices:

WE ARE A SEPARATE LINE, WITH OUR SEPARATE TRADITIONS.

It is time to take our place in the sun,  
& declare ourselves a Protean Tradition.

Our strength really is in our diversity, and so this Tradition (as I see it) has room for Gardnerians and Norskis and Quakers and Hindus and even the occasional fundamentalist among us, with no need to be closing doors to our family members; in fact, our mutual respect seems to preclude such elitism altogether. We already have some experts on Hindus and Celts and Catholics and who-knows-what-else in this family, certainly a little more high-quality diversity can't hurt us! And the potential benefit to the greater Craft community, of a tradition which really DOES give respect to the individual's connection to the Godhead, is too great to be lost.

For too many years we have kowtowed and hidden our lights beneath bushels, trying to fit into a mold that we have outgrown. I humbly propose that the Gods must've grown us this way for a purpose; it's time we take up this purpose, and fulfill the call.

Blessings to all -  
Dana



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